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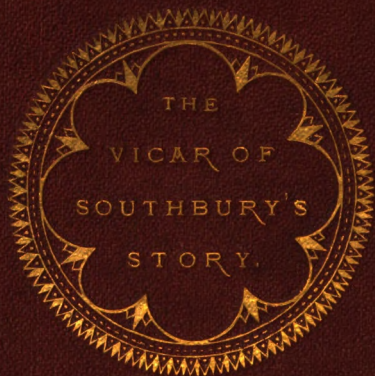
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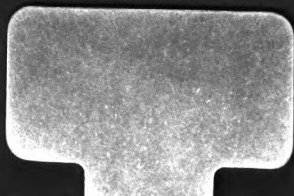
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THE
Vicar of Southbury's Story.

A CHRISTMAS POEM,

BY

A POET.



A youth
That means to be of note begins betimes.
SHAKESPEARE.

London:

ALFRED W. BENNETT,

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PREFACE.

THE publication of a Poem is, as it were, the launching of a Bark on a great Ocean—the Ocean of Public Opinion. Great are the risks attending the Voyage; almost infinite the chances against the safe arrival of the frail Vessel at Success Haven, in the Continent of Fame, wafted thither, as it must be, by the Trade Wind of Applause. For the Arctic Ocean of Disappointment, out of which rise the bleak and barren Islands of Neglect and Hope Deferred, in which latter heart-sickening waters abound, is far more frequently reached by the Young Voyager. Should the far off Land of

Posthumous Fame be gained, it is oftentimes by sailing down the dreary Straits of Life-long Poverty. But the Bark is launched, and, may I venture to think, is launched at a propitious period of the year ; and to keep his eye steadfastly fixed on the Compass of Hope, and pray for a fair wind, is all that is left for

THE POET.

CANTO I.

THE TEMPEST.

13
By the sea stands the village Southbury,
As lovely a village as you might see
Were you to travel a long summer's day.
It stands on the shore of a horse-shoe bay,—
A bay surrounded with worn old rocks
That have braved the furious tempest's shocks
Thousands of years ; they were worn and grey
In the eagle-bannered Cæsar's day.

Southbury stands three furlongs, or more,
Back from the rock-defended shore ;—
Rock-defended, save where, as if cleft,
These to the right hand, these to the left,
The rocks are parted—leaving a way
To the tide-uncovered strand of the bay

Where, when the pitiless gale has rolled
Its death-bearing billows over the hold
Of some good vessel, the drift-wood comes,
Telling of desolate, ruined homes,—
Breaking the stalk of the sweet sea-pink
That grows on the very extremest brink
Of the cliffs, enlivening the sombre shore,
As the western tints 'liven the twilight hour.
The village has been a village for ages ;
Its name is seen in the Doomsday Book's pages.
There's a ruined, useless, worn out windmill ;
And a quaint Norman church upon a hill,
About whose porch now the ivy climbs.
There's a stately mansion, they call it " the Limes, '
Where Sir Hubert de Horne, Baronet, dwells ;
In the aisle of the church a tablet tells
That his ancestors fought by the Conqueror's side,
And people forgive him an inborn pride,
That looks from his eye, that points every word,
For of Southbury manor he is the sole lord.

Hidden in foliage the vicarage stands.
Time, alas ! now with his meddling hands

Has taken away the vicar I knew,
With his cheery voice—his eyes of sea blue—
His welcome to all—his old shovel hat ;—
But, as the French say, “ We have changed all that.”
And his place is filled, and filled well they say,
By another vicar whose hair is grey,
Who has grown old watching the seasons glide
In Southbury vicarage by the sea-side.

But it's not with him that we have to do,
But with the first loved vicar I knew,
When calmly, peacefully, down life's hill—
As flows some gentle meadow-land rill—
His years were gliding ; the bordering flowers
Were imaged in never-forgotten hours,
When sage advice—the forget-me-not that—
Or—shadowed by daisy—the friendly chat,—
Or the story—we'll call that the fair king-cup—
Filled every line of his journal up.

But the meadow-land brook, tho' it rolls along
With cadence sweet as a mother's song

Over the crib of the drowsy child,
May have risen in regions rocky and wild,
May have leapt mimic cataracts, foamed in glee
In caverns dark, where no eye might see
Its restless tossings from side to side ;
Then, perchance, awhile the stream may glide
Where arching shrubs and nightshade deadly
Make, one would think, it murmur sadly :
Such course might be meadow-land stream's we know,
And the vicar's career was even so.

He told me a chapter of his life's tale,
Long, long ago—I remember it well—
A dark, wild-featured, and sad story,—
A page from life's book, stained, yea gory ;—
Yet, on t'other side, in letters of gold,
Its sweet antithesis might be told ;
A tale of love and hate and slaughter,
In which the vicar's only daughter
Bore a chief part, and the baronet's sire
Showed some of the furious Norman fire
His fathers showed.—And now I would strive
To let the story in poesy live.

And well does it fit at Christmas tide,
When seated around the loved fireside,
To tell of deeds—not gloomy and sad
Perforce—but high deeds mingled with bad,
As ever in our wrecked world will be
Hatred and love, sin and charity.

The vicar's tale in truth should be told
When the nights about Christmas are long and cold ;
When men's thoughts are fixed on the wondrous star
That lighted the magi from afar :—
For, as round the pole the hop-bines cling,
Even so the story that I would sing
Doth its tendrils around bright Christmas fling.

I.

Ninety years ago ! Boys have grown men
Since then—babes have been suckled, and lived, and
died,—
Names have grown powerful, and vanished again,—
Children that then were their parents' pride

Have conquered, been conquered, written and read ;
Bowed in agony, laughed in joy,
Smiled at hopes borne out, or mourned them dead ;
And perchance the curly-pated boy
Whose kiss was his mother's morning feast,
Who said, " When I'm a man thus will I do,"—
Who promised great things—has done the least :—
While the bashful child, whose eyes of blue
Seemed dreamily fixed on the days to be,
Who cared not for cricket or merry foot-ball,
And perchance was laughed at (but what cared he ?)—
A few short years—he could laugh at them all.
And the man with the hoary coronet,
The honourable wreath of grey,
Was a puling child—nay rather *was not*,
When ninety years ago was to-day.

II.

The vicar I knew, whose course, fancy-driven,
I compared to a murmuring meadow-land brook's,
These years ago had been newly riven
From his dearly valued college books,
And placed in the tree-hid vicarage
With a young wife and an infant daughter—

So young by months they summed her age,—
Her eyes, like his, mocked the deep sea water ;
Her scanty hair showed a tinge of gold,
Her face seemed to promise a beauty rare ;
Tho'—as after years to many have told—
Count not on beauty tho' the babe be fair.

III.

Sir Hubert de Horne, who lives in the Limes,
Was not ;—his sire had seen three Christmas days,—
His dark flashing eye told of the times
When the Norman conquered the Saxon race ;
Near his black ringlets the shears never came,
In jetty masses they flowed round his head ;
The boy would have honoured any proud name,
And he was every inch a De Horne it was said,—
His father's sole pride, for his mother was dead.

IV.

The sun had gone down on Christmas eve
'Midst lowering tiers of snow-laden cloud.
Shrilly the wind was whistling—not loud ;—
Moaning, as if it were taking its leave

Of souls which its rising wrath would launch
From their bark that rode on the wind-lashed sea,
To the waveless one of eternity !
Now the wind roared,—and it tore a branch
From a chestnut tree that stood by the side
Of the vicarage. Then again it sighed,
As weary of ever bringing woe.
Why should the wind be the sailor's arch-foe ?
Why should he spare nor beauty, nor youth ?
Why should he strive, as 't were his in sooth
When men put trust in the faithless waves,
To make them, alas ! too often graves ?
Why, Vesta ! thou who hold'st in thy breast
The howling winds ! why not let them rest,
When the frail argosy's like to sink ?
Æolus ! thou whose cave on the brink
Of old ocean stands ! Oh thou tyrant say
Why dost thou not curb the winds in their play ?

V.

The young horned moon in her arms had borne
The old dead moon—as I've heard it said.
A lurid tinge the sunset had worn ;
And a weather-wise sailor had shaken his head,

And said, " There'll be wrecks ere rises the morn,
The mermaid with many a one shall wed,
Ere the first grey streak of the morn is seen
That brings the birthday of the Nazarene."

VI.

And when, in the old Norman church on the hill,
The bells were ringing bright Christmas in,—
Like the noise of the torrent sweeping the linn,
Like the rush of the flood-laden mountain rill,
Came the fierce north wind ; and he hurled the rocks,
Not unused to tempestuous shocks,
Down from the cliffs to the sands below ;
And he brought with him wreaths of drifting snow.
He crushed down hazels that long had stood,
Ancient fathers of Southbury wood ;
He plucked strong saplings out of the earth,
And seemed to laugh with a mocking mirth,
As every stroke of his mighty breath
Doomed a king of the woods to instant death.

VII.

The crested waves dashed on the rocky shore,
White as the snow-flakes the north wind bore.

They raised their heads, as tho' they would say,
"Contend with us, strive with us, he who may!
Oh ho! we can swamp the swiftest bark,—
What care we tho' the night is dark?
We see by the light of our own white foam!—
Here she is a stranger—we are at home.—
Plank by plank, and sail by sail
We tear her.—What tho' the seaman wail?
Thousands of comrades as brave as he
Have found a bed 'neath the waves of the sea!"

VIII.

Over the village the fierce gale passed.
So fierce was that howling winter blast
That the babe and the old man both awoke,
And trembled as the frail cottage shook;
Started as down fell the crashing trees;
Cowered at the sound of the furious breeze.
All were awakened. Who could be still
With the elements taking their heedless fill
Of fury? Who could rest in his bed
With the tempest flying over his head?
Such a tempest as seldom will come
On the shores of our Anglo-Saxon home,

Though often its devastating power
Startles, at midday or midnight hour,
The voyager in the Indian ocean.
Say, who has felt the cyclone's motion ?
E'en such a furious storm was this.
It made tall masts the waters kiss ;
It mocked the sailor's trembling clasp,
And, taking from his useless grasp
The rudder, drove ev'n where it would,
Ships that had varied storms withstood,
In Biscay's Bay, or in the tides
That lave old Scandinavia's sides.

IX.

There's an hour in some men's histories, when
Shut out from the reach of their fellow-men,
Speechless brutes have been solaces, and [stand
The thought that e'en they were near made them with-
The whispers, the promptings, despair and fear—
(For man alone these are ever near)—
Had grimly muttered.—And it is told,
With spiders and rats the captive will hold
Staid converse, rather than feel alone—
A solitary unit—one.—

And when the lightning flash rends the sky,
Man's prayer is ever, " Oh ! let me die
Not in the forest, alone—but where
My friends and companions, mankind, are near !"

X.

And when this tempest still was spending
Its wrath, and yet seemed not like ending,—
Curdling the blood in the veins of all,
Dwellers in cottage, dwellers in hall,
Each longed to be near his neighbour,— and so
One and another, scorning the snow,
Heeding not Boreas' pitiless blast,
Sped to their neighbours' houses in haste ;
And the light in the cottage window pane
Told that they sought not companions in vain.

XI.

Gathered in little trembling groups,
Their deep distress, their fears, their hopes,
Took the form of tears, and prayers, and smiles ;
 The mother prayed for her sailor son,
 The maiden wept for as dear a one.
Most of the dwellers in our fair isles

Are bound by strong cords of love to the sea ;
And ocean-fronted Southbury
Could say—" Where branching groves of coral
 Make gay the oriental strands ;
Where the Indian dives for the costly pearl ;
 On the waves dashing on unknown lands ;
Where the moon sways not the Greece-laving tides ;
On the floods washing Columbia's sides ;
On the track of the spermaceti whale,
In the realm where rock-ice mountains sail,—
Those whose first voyage was in Southbury Bay,
Have sailed since last blest Christmas day."

XII.

And so, when the storm-winds rent the sky,
Many a prayer, and many a sigh
Rose from Southbury. This night of all,
Black as the velvet funereal pall,
Stormy as landsmen might well conceive,
No wonder it made the mothers grieve
If no star of Bethlehem shone thro' the gloom.
Ah ! it brought old ocean's perils home
To the inmost heart ! Hush ! what was that boom ?

The iron-tongued messenger, whose deep voice
Is heard above the loud tempest's noise ?
Or was it only some rocky mass
Hurled by the gale down the mimic crevasse ?

XIII.

Again ! Ah see they clasp their hands, knowing
That soon the victor waves will be flowing
Over the hands that fired that gun !
Again ! Great Heavens, how near that was !
The winds had lulled, and the moment's pause
Sent to their heart, like a weighty stone,
That sad, despair-urged, booming shot,
The more that they could help them not,
Tho' there was many a willing one.

XIV.

Now peering from the doors they stood,
Their faces blanched as the white snow falling.
They heard the roaring of the flood,
And the iron-tongued messenger's timed calling,
And wept to think they could not save,
That these must find the sailor's grave ;

And that, ere arose the Christmas hymn,
Their bodies wave-broken, their bright eyes dim,
'Midst ocean's stolen treasures, or stretched on the shore,
They'd lie, each one's tale being, "He is no more."

XV.

Then spoke one who had known the power
Of the awful agonizing hour
When Death's master-mariner of the craft;
Had floated for days on the slender raft,
Till Hope's features grew so airy and wan
'Twas hard to say that she had not gone;
Yet had lived to tell by his own fireside
Of those dreary hours on th' Atlantic tide.—

XVI.

"Why stand we here helpless and idle
While fellow-beings are on the brink
Eternal? 'Tis true the ship must sink
That drives (unless He who the storm can bridle
Wills otherwise)—on the Spaniard's Stone,
As the deep boom tells us, drives that one.

But that gun says too—‘ Still there is hope ;’
Even our shout, men, much good will do,
The death-doomed mariner’s life ’twill renew :
And if even one man clutch at our rope,
If we save one father—one loved son,—
Think of the tears of joy that will run
Adown the cheeks of the nigh orphaned boy,—
The widowed dame ;—think of our own pure joy
Beginning the hallowed Christmas Day
By snatching from ocean’s teeth his prey,
A soul for whom Christ, long long ago,
Left his bright heaven for earth below—
This very night ;—but not such a night
As this, when the waves and welkin fight,
For I have read that earth was calm,
Her breast was smooth as tho’ soothing balm
Had been poured on her perturbed restless sprite.
Why should we fear this storm-riven night ?
When I was a boy I’ve heard it told
That this night no storm nor curse would hold,—
Tho’, alas ! it seems that may not be,
What charm more powerful than the lures of the sea ?
What curse more weighty than the foaming waves
Every one headstones o’er sailors’ graves ?

That boom again ! But oh ! make haste
For every one may be the last !
By the black rock, the Spaniard's Stone,
There, friends, you'll find me. What ! alone
Am I to go ? Does no one here
Feel for the drowning mariner ? ”

XVII.

He spoke. They drew back. What could they do ?
No boat could live in that sea they knew ;
And what was the aid of a slender rope ?
A ne'er fulfilled treacherous hope.
But hush ! through the storm a step was heard,
And, hoary with snow, the forms appeared
Of the vicar and the baronet.
In haste they seemed—“ Ah, friends, well met !
Just now when the hidden moon outshone
We saw a ship strike on the Spaniard's Stone.
We may, we may, be not too late
To save from their too cruel fate,
To die on this well-loved Christmas Day,
From home and friends, perhaps far away,
Some of her precious freight ;—follow us, friends,
Bring that rope—hasten—God speed our ends ! ”

XVIII.

The rock they called the Spaniard's Stone
Guards the entrance to Southbury Bay.
There sank a Spanish galleon
In a legendary long-past day.
And still they said the waves would cast
The broad doubloon of Spanish gold
Upon the rocks, when the tempest passed
Thro' the long-sunken vessel's hold.
The treacherous rock was but half seen
Save when Diana her power withdrew,
Then it stretched a line of dusky hue
Amidst the expanse of olive green ;
And many a sailor at dead of night,
With the twinkling stars his only light,
Had felt the soul-benumbing shock
As his keel struck on the Spaniard's Rock.

XIX.

As when despairing souls in the womb
Of sin enwrapped strive to pierce the gloom,
And find deliverance from their woe ;—
So eagerly peering through darkness and snow,

On the brink of the foaming flood,
The would-be mariner-rescuers stood.
Anon a fitful lunar beam
Made the waves like diamonds gleam,
And then, some all too eager eye,
Not afar off, would fain descry
The form of the storm-tossed bark,—but no
The others would say it was not so ;
'Twas but the form of the crested wave.—
And now they feared they might not save.
The gun that told “ Still they have life ”—
 (And when there's life there is hope 'tis said)—
Had ceased ;—perhaps they had ceased their strife,
 And all were wave-conquered—all were dead !

XX.

The vicar spoke :—“ Alas ! alas !
 That Christmas Day should be ushered in so !
Nought can we do, and three hours must pass
 Ere the tardy day to our eyes shall show
Where the poor tempest-broken bark lies ;
Then home, friends—but when the orient skies
Tell that the day is coming apace,
Hie to this rock,—as the hope of grace

Dwells in each breast, oh ! fail me not !
I alone if need be, about this spot,
Will, urged by a faint gold-bordered hope stay :
For the cruel waves in their boisterous play
Ofttimes, not knowing what they do,
Scarce dead upon the shore will throw
The sailor's form, and right means pursued,
Will cause again the mantling blood
Its wonted course thro' the veins to run.
Nay, friends, adieu till the Christmas sun
Has risen,—then, if you all are here,
We may save the wreck-clinging mariner."

XXI.

But scarcely had the vicar spoken.
When, wet and bleeding, bruised and broken,
Even to his very feet, there came
A form in which the vital flame
Was quenched. And they knew that it was so :
For, as the modest lilies grow
With down-hung heads—just so his drooped ;
And not as tho' it only stooped,
For the winds floated it, as when
The broken reed in the marshy fen,

Is swayed from side to side by the breeze
That would not ruffle the forest trees.
His hands were clenched—his teeth were set :
The vicar and the baronet
Shuddered when Luna's fickle beam
Showed his pale face,—the hopeless gleam
That still seemed to lighten his death-dimmed eye,—
The sea-weed o'er his face ; and a sigh
Upheaved thro' the breast of every one
For that sailor wrecked on the Spaniard's Stone.

XXII.

The dawn of that Christmas Day had now
Paled Diana's bright hornèd brow.
The sun rose over the still foaming deep :
But the winds were lulled, as tho' gentle sleep
Had conquered them. And the morn was fair :
Wore such a look as the morn will wear
After the gale ;—a look so sweet !
But ah ! so full of bitter deceit !
As when the false maiden at the glass
Smooths into form her ruffled face,
Yet at the heart wears hatred and scorn,—
Such was the look of that harlot morn.

XXIII.

With the first grey tint the villagers flock
Round the bay to the Spaniard's Rock.
And, slowly growing on their view,
A dark shape rose.—Ah ! too well they knew
The pitiable, shattered form
Wrecks wore the morning after the storm !
High o'er the waves the prow was raised,
And on the uplifted prow they traced
The vessel's name,—*L'Etoile de la Mer*—
 (*Star of the Sea*—oh cruel sea
 To quench thy star thus woefully !) :—
An utter wreck, washed clean and bare,
Save for some tattered sails that clung
To the bowed mast yet, while some hung
 About the bowsprit dismally.

XXIV.

Then all were drowned—and it was denied
To Southbury to save from old ocean's grasp
Even one soul. And the hungry tide
 Held in his world-encircling clasp

All those who in that hour of anguish,
When bravest souls will droop and languish,
Had trod that deck. Just five hours ago
The last boom of concentrated woe
Had issued from *L'Etoile de la Mer*,
And where were those that urged it? Where?

XXV.

But why that cry? Why point to the wreck,
As if there trod the poor wave-washed deck
The bronze-faced hardy mariner yet?
As if day had not come all too late
For rescue? They point to that fluttering sail;
And see, the women's cheeks grow pale!
What can it be that moves them so?
“The foremast!” Well? “A boat here! Ho!”
’Tis strange, is there treasure then on board?
Some of that metal which misers hoard,
Of which those to whom a fair portion is given
Can win all but—happiness and heaven?
Perish the thought! For Southbury men—
Whatever they may be now—would then
Rather have saved a life from the main,
Than lost it for mountains of soul-wrecking gain.

Never a false light from Southbury
Had misled the mariner out at sea.
They would not joy thus if gold were there,—
What then did they find in *L'Etoile de la Mer*?

XXVI.

When over the wreck the light breeze past,
Freeing the dripping sail from the mast,
Did you not see a figure bound,
(With the cables lashed securely round,)
To that foremast? A female figure?

 This, this it was that raised that cry!

 Now for the boat, see, see they fly!
Now straining all their manly vigour
They ply the swift oars.—She may be dead,
But sweet hope has never vanishèd
Till misery's lowest depths are known.
Now they glide towards the Spaniard's Stone!
High rise the waves, and the fragile boat
Scarcely knows whether to sink or float.

XXVII.

They scale the sides of the wave-washed wreck;—
Now carefully tread the slippery deck,—

Unbind the mast-lashed form.—What was that ?
A child—a mere babe—oh thrice-cruel Fate !
Poor little voyager, thy first and last
Voyage is cut short by this pitiless blast !
Born but to die, and to die, ah me !
On Christmas Day in the raging sea.
It may not be so,—you may have life,
Tho' stronger than you could not stand the strife ;
Atropos' shears may have spared thy thread—
That third fixed Fate whom all men must dread—
Scarce has the tissue passed Clotho's fingers,
And still, it may be, thy spirit lingers
About its throne, which it scarce can know,—
So short a time has it been below.

XXVIII.

The child was clasped in the woman's arms,
But the twain they separate tenderly.
And now, to shield it from further harms,
From the salt waves of the still rough sea—
He wrapt the slender figure with care
That strong man—(just as the maiden fair,
Who has seen but five or six birthdays,
Softly in mimic mantle arrays

The puppet figure, whose gaudy dress
Has been for weeks the dear maid's distress) ;
So gently enwrapped he in his coat
The child.—And now they're all in the boat,
O'er the rough waves she's bounding again,
Urged by the swift strokes of Southbury men.

XXIX.

Swift thro' the surges the light boat sped,
To the village the dripping forms are borne,
The village sage shook his hoary head,—
Said he—" Christ's birthday is their death morn. '
And it seemed so.—For the woman's eye
Lacked lustre ; and that cold wax-like hue
The features of the dead wear aye,
Hers wore. And the boy in his mantle blue—
A velvet mantle of shape that told,
Not of our island fickle and cold,
But rather of sunny France's shore,—
(As told the name on the vessel's prore)—
Had clenched, as in the hour of death,
When struggling for his latest breath,
His unavailing hands,—and a smile
Lurked on his features infantile ;

As tho' some cherub had floated above,
To bear him away to the realms of love
Where shipwrecks are not, and the only tides
Are those that lave the gold-margined sides
Of the river of life,—and he had seen
The o'erhanging cherub's glittering sheen.

XXX.

They tried each wile the restorative art
Has, thro' long ages, accumulated
To impel the slumbering, yet scarce cold heart
To action.—And long time they waited
With hushèd breath, and the tense-strung ear,
Striving the faintest sound to hear
Which might revive their hope nigh-vanished.
(So in the jungle the huntsman benighted
Lists for the fell tiger's stealthy tread ;—)
But the faintest gleam of hope's star seemed banished,
When they heard the sound of the Christmas bell—
That messenger sweet, which ever will tell
The glorious story of love supreme.—
“ Ah ! now,” they said, “ we need never dream
Of saving them ! We have done all we can,
But He has said ‘ Come,’ who is stronger than man.”

XXXI.

Who can fathom it ? Who can tell
Where the souls of the drowning dwell ?
Or whether, attached by an unseen cord,
They hover aloft, till death's sharp sword
Severs them from the seat of their reign,
Till time is no more not to fill it again ?
Or whether the water's subtle power,
In the awful drowning hour,
Displaces the soul, not loath to fly—
If it may do so—to its native sky ?

XXXII.

Men saved from drowning have ever told
That, when the billows over them rolled,
Memory's tablets were so refreshed,
And with such living pictures dressed,
That the deeds of their boyhood, every one,—
The follies rank that in youth were done,—
And the actions of but yesterday
Passed before them in long array ;
That crimes forgotten,—harsh words spoken,—
And the rash vow as rashly broken,—

With, here and there, a sweet oasis
Regretless,—long, long buried faces,—
Their whole life's story flitted by ;
And that a sharp thrill of agony
Pierced the well nigh wave-conquered frame,
When back the wandering spirit came.

XXXIII.

You have seen in early summer a shiver
Run thro' the aspens down by the river,
Causeless, a sort of ghostly quaking,—
A wondrous, weirdly, sad-like shaking ;
Such a quiver, when each one had said,
Mournfully, mournfully, shaking his head,
“ They are dead,—the days of their pilgrimage
Are over,—no more the tempest's rage
Will have dread for them ”—ran thro' the frame
Of the child. Did then a spark of the flame,
The strange spirit-lamp that burns in the breast
Of all men—did then a piece of wick rest
Unquenched in his bosom ? And might it be fanned
To a flame by Æsculapius' wand ?

XXXIV.

The delver in the gold-mingled soil
Thinks nought of the months of weary toil,
Remembers not the despairing hour,
That day when black despondency's power
Was monarch of his thoughts, when—behold !
Before his glad eyes lies the virgin gold !
With equal, if not superior joy,
They saw the life rush thro' the veins of the boy.
They forgot all the hours of sad suspense,
And yielded themselves to the pleasing sense
Of having been almost creators,—
As it were—feeble imitators
Of Deity. For in truth they had given,
They, aided by ever-powerful heaven,
Life to a breathless mass of cold clay.
Bright seems to them this glad Christmas Day ;
And they can appreciate the gladness,
Tho' after years of pain and sadness,
Of Him who gave life to a world dead in sin,—
Who, by His own death, a world's life did win.

XXXV.

The boy was lovely, and, one would have said,
Had seen three summers. Dark-locked was his head ;
His bright eye dark. The peachy bloom
On his cheeks seemed to say, “ We were at home
Where the hills are vine-clad, the skies are blue,
And not often wear the dull leaden hue
They wear in these cold northern isles.”
And soon his sweet face was covered with smiles,
And soon he prattled in Frankish tongue
As childhood will prattle ; but not for long :
For on strange English faces his dark eye fell ;
Who they might be he could not tell.
Then o’er his memory seemed to flash,
As was told by quivering lip and eyelash,
A picture of that tempestuous sea,
And, sorely perplexed, he sobbed out—“ Marie ! ”

XXXVI.

They showed him the woman with long black hair,
Alas ! how silently she lay there !
Death was traced on her cold white brow,—
Death, to whom loveliest ones must bow,—

Loathsome death, whom the dainty maiden
Who at the thought of decay would redden,
Must clasp, far closer than lover than clasp
The beauteous form he holds in his grasp.
The boy, when he saw the poor pale face,
Strove to clasp in his warm embrace
The form it surmounted. But tenderly
They led him from the dead one away.
And still with piteous voice sobbed he
In Frankish tongue—" Marie ! Marie !"

XXXVII.

But childhood's griefs are like the thistle down,
One moment here—the next moment gone
Far away, no one knows whither ;
Or like the light cloud in windy weather,
Dimming the sun for a moment or two—
A pale white speck on the arc of blue—
Now—quite lost to the onlookers' view !
And when the boy was ta'en to the vicarage,
There was many a thing his thoughts to engage.
He forgot the white face of poor Marie,
Forgot all about the tempestuous sea.

Many a childish question he put,
The vicar in sooth was hardly put to 't,
To answer them—(Ninety years ago
Every village child did not know
How our neighbours the Channel across
Spoke to each other). Sometimes at a loss
The vicar would be,—and then he would say
In French—"I'll tell you, boy, some other day."

XXXVIII.

For weeks and months on the Spaniard's Stone
L'Etoile de la Mer lay rotting. No one
Could be found to claim her. And no one knew
Aught of the passengers or the crew.
Three had been cast ashore in the Bay,
But there was not a single line to say
Where they came from—for where they were bound ;
All Southbury knew was—that they were drowned.
And they gave them graves by the side of Marie
In their churchyard that stands not far from the sea.
Still at the vicarage lived the child ;
His tongue had begun to be reconciled
To our harsh old Anglo-Saxon words.
And, if tongues are compared to sharp-cutting swords,

His was a two-edged one, blunt either side.
But soon he began to take a pride
In making known what he wished to say
In English ; tho' often his thoughts would stray
To Frankish words, and his tongue would obey.

XXXIX.

But when spring tides o'er the Spaniard's Stone
Uprose,—the wrecked *L'Etoile de la Mer*
Glided off the black rock and went down ;—
No one knew how deep it was there—
Many a fathom—for never a trace
Was seen of the ship,—and her wonted place
Looked vacant next morning, when Southbury
Not a vestige of her could see.

XL.

When all connected with him was thus lost—
All save the blue mantle tempest-tossed—
The vicar felt that the boy was given,
By oft-mysteriously acting heaven,
Or for a blessing, or, it might be,
(Tho' the Jonahs are oftenest lost at sea)—

For a curse.—But still he was God-sent,
And *Theodore* he named him ; altho'
The boy with sweet half-French, half-Saxe accent
Said he was called “ *Petit Jeannot*.”

What in after years fell to the lot
Of the rescued boy is mine to say—
Sad, or joyous, I alter it not,
Tho' my poet soul may sometimes sway
My pen to dwell a little upon
Things that it loves. And perchance some one
Will murmur, and sigh for Homeric trance,
Sad Byron's grandeur, or Pope's elegance.
Ah, well ! I'm not like them, I'm rough, and I'm free,
An untrammelled poet—and so I must be.

CANTO II.

THE RIVALS.

I.

Fair and wide are bright Fancy's realms,
There no step-staying ocean rolls ;
No limits to her wide sway are set,
Nor is it bounded by far-off poles.
The farthest star that shines in the night
Fancy may people with wondrous shapes ;
Heaven is seen thro' Fancy's telescope ;
And the black abyss of hell that gapes
Ever insatiate, Fancy has shown
To mankind's horror-stricken view.
On Fancy time no embargo lays,
Swifter she flies than he can pursue.

Thousands of years fly by if she will,—
She tells what will be when time is no more ;
And the poet is privileged to stray
On Fancy's spell-weaving, magic shore.

II.

And I, a weaver of simple song,
Would claim this most ancient right of the poet,—
(Gold is the warp—what the woof will be
I know not)—and so your thoughts would float
Down the river of time, not very far,
And yet some may call it a long, long way,—
To the child a year is a long, long time,
To the man last year's but like yesterday ;—
Twenty years would I float down time's river ;
Twenty Christmas days would I pass by—
Save one ; and then I would pause and whisper,
Would ask if you've seen the bright July sky,
When the dial said 'twas meridian hour,
Suddenly with the black rain-clouds o'ercast ;
Seen the thick rain fall, and wisely said,
“ Ah well, 'tis too heavy—this will not last ! ”

Nor would it : for, in a short hour or two,
The sky would brighten, the rain would cease,
And a lovely evening would follow the rain —
An eve, sweet emblem of heavenly peace.
'T was thus, in meridian hour of his life,
The sky of the vicar was darkened o'er ;
He told me the story in the calm evening,
After he'd felt the fierce tempest's power.

III.

But ere we pass o'er these twenty years—
Years like all others here below,
With smiling springs, and laughing summers,
Autumn's fruit, and winter's snow,—
We must tell what happed at Southbury.
Well, death flew by there one June day,
In his chariot drawn by ash-pale steeds,
And took the vicar's loved spouse away.
She sat in the library that June eve,
Musing on the sweet story of old,
And gradually she dropped to sleep,
While the heavens were tinged with the evening gold.

IV.

The vicar's daughter, whose scanty hair
Was golden-hued when her days were few,
Grew ever lovelier, ever more fair.

Her large blue eyes were of such a blue,
That they seemed like orbs of liquid ether
As seen in unclouded July weather ;
Her hair in shining masses rolled
Over her shoulders, like skeins of gold.
She had no brother, so Theodore
Was brother to her, and something more ;
She had no loving, clinging sister,
But Theodore was far more to her.

V.

Ever together the twain would be ;
And Hubert, the baronet's fiery son,
In the hazel wood—by the strand of the sea—
Was oft-times their willing companion.
Together they gathered, in spring of the year,
The sweet spring flowers with childish joy—
(The flowers the city child holds so dear) ;—
But Hubert was a strange kind of boy,

Gloomy, and moody, and pensive he seemed,
Of strange wild projects he often dreamed ;
Now he would want to sail afar,
In quest of the beaming evening star ;
Or he would stand for hours by the side
Of the ocean, watching the rising tide,
Laughing with boyish and heedless glee
When drenched by the foam of the boisterous sea ;
Or he'd wander alone in the wood for hours,—
And little cared he for the sweet spring flowers.
Wild seemed his spirit, his thoughts were wild ;—
And he was, in fact, just such a child
As, unbridled, will prove a grief to all,—
Tamed—has a spirit like Roman Paul,
Devoted with all its wild energy,
To what has enthralled it, whatever it be.

VI.

And alas ! he had no kind mother to guide !
And his father loved him too well to chide.
And, as the years flew, his restless soul
Burst thro' the bonds of wholesome control.
He laughed at his father and he said—" Son
Such a thing I hear you have done."

“Father, I did it”—he’d say with a smile,
Which, as he knew, was a powerful wile :
For his father would say, “Ah, well, just so
I acted when I was a boy, I know.”
And so he grew up, errant and wild,
Like many before him—a love-spoiled child.

VII.

A far different boy was Theodore.
Even as a child o’er the tomes he would pore
Of wisdom’s lovers of every age,
From those who believed in that tangled skein—
Mythology, to the sacred page
Of Israel’s king who said “All is vain.”
And Lucy would listen with deep amaze,
With inquiring eye, with wondering gaze,
As he to her would strive to expound
What, in his latest treasure, he’d found
That made him marvel. And thus the more
Was Lucy’s soul knitted to Theodore.

VIII.

In the depths of the hazel wood
A lovely ruined old castle stood.

The wild dove wheeled round the ruined tower,—
There did the owl hoot at midnight hour,—
Dry was the moat,—and the battlements high,
That showed so fair 'gainst the summer sky,
Were broken, and fallen,—for sad old time
Had crushed in his fingers the mouldering lime ;
Where once the woodbine and jessamine twined
The clinging ivy is all we find ;—
'Tis roofless, doorless, and I have seen
Wild flowers grow where the hearth has been.
There, when rose-mantled morn appeared,
Or, sometimes, when grey-cloaked twilight neared,
And Dian hung o'er the neighbouring dell—
Lucy and he would loiter, and tell
What they would do in the days to come,
The days that were still in future's womb.

IX.

This was at the age when life's rough chart
On ne'er a shallow had wrecked the heart :
The age when the boy says, " Thus will I do
Ere life's long journey I travel through,"
Never dreaming of all the crosses,
All the thwartings, all the losses,

His weary spirit must sure sustain
Ere its native heaven it reach again :
The age when he who, long after, will sing,
Tempts in vain flights his unfledged wing ;
When he who will travel, o'er the map pores,
Planning wild journeys to far distant shores ;
He who will conquer, seizes the sword,
Bids his companions call him—" My lord ;"
And he who, unnoted, will live and die,
Wades thro' his hornbook with many a sigh.

X.

But when gay childhood was saying adieu
To the boys—tho' scarce to Lucy, for she
Had seen three summers less than they two—
Hubert and Theodore left Southbury
For the town that stands on the banks of the Cam,
That spot where the lamp holding wisdom's flame
Still burns, and the subtle power's imparted
To wisdom's seekers—steadfast-hearted.
Errant Hubert of course erred deeper,
And Theodore strove to be his keeper,
For he loved him well ; and, though haughty and proud
To most others, Hubert seldom showed

His pride to Theodore. But terms passed,
And still Hubert erred each one more than the last.
And Theodore gently chided his friend,—
Bade him reflect on the fearful end
Of the race he was running ; but Hubert smiled,
Said he—“ The De Hornes have ever been wild.”

XI.

Each time that they visited Southbury
Lucy seemed lovelier. Hubert saw,
With admiration mingled with awe,
Her wondrous beauty. 'Twas strange that he
Had never seen it these years before.
And as struck was calmer Theodore.
To which one Lucy gave preference
Was evident ; and, in her innocence,
So plainly did she her leaning show
Towards Theodore, that Hubert's knit brow—
His lips compressed in silent scorn,—
Told that not only did he admire
The maiden, but that love's subtle fire
(For love's admiration's eldest born)
Burned in his breast ; and that jealousy—
That rank weed which in hearts' gardens grows,

And crushes out lily purity,
And that flower as sweet, the red love rose—
Had gained a place in his heart,—altho'
Nor Lucy nor Theodore dreamt it was so.

XII.

When Theodore on the threshold stood
Of the boy's bright goal, long-wished manhood,
He told the vicar the tale of his love ;
What could the vicar do but approve ?
All along he had thought it would be,
Tho', that Hubert loved Lucy too, he could see.
But he simply said—" Well, Theodore,
You'll be Southbury vicar when I am no more,
And what more fitting than you should wed
The old vicar's daughter ?" He laid on his head
His hands, and, with one soul-urged kiss,
Sealed, Theodore thought, his life-long bliss.

XIII.

This is how Lucy was courted by Theodore :
They stood by the ruin at twilight hour ;

“ Do you remember, Lucy, the day—
When beneath these hoary walls we lay,
Watching the busy martins float,
Cleaving the ether, as ocean the boat ;—
Listlessly eyeing a flying cloud
That first took the form of a castle proud,
Then you saw, Lucy, in its form a horse,—
I, you remember, a shrouded corse,—
While Hubert said, in variance rare,
He saw the face of a maiden fair ?
And do you remember, Lucy, that I,
Foolishly, an you will, boyishly,
Asked an you loved me, and you said ‘ Aye ?’
Oh ! Lucy, say but that word again
And I’m the happiest, love, of men.”

XIV.

That she said “Aye ”—I need scarcely say ;
And ’twas fixed from that betrothal day
That Lucy and he would wed, when he
Became the curate of Southbury.
For it was planned that he should aid
The vicar in his declining days,

And, when the hoary crown on his head
Cried for sweet rest, glide into his place.

XV.

When Hubert knew how 'twas fixed, he strove
Hard to think that he did not love
The vicar's daughter,—but strove in vain ;
The void in his breast, the soul-gnawing pain
That smote him whenever the dreadful thought
He realized,—that for him Lucy was not,
Told him a far far different tale,—
Gloomy he grew, and restless, and pale ;
Scarce spoke to Theodore, or, if he spoke,
Scorn was in his tone—hate in his look.

XVI.

The baronet noticed his clouded brow ;
Said he, “ Hubert, my son, tell me how
'Tis that at midnight I hear your tread,
When all, save the bat and the owl, are in bed,
Pacing the western corridor ?
Say, art thou jealous of Theodore ?

Dost thou mourn for the vicar's daughter,
With Saxon face—eyes like sea water ?
Nay, Hubert, is't so ? I never thought
That your Norman heart was so cheaply bought !
When I was a boy, and, Hubert, in love,

The maid had cheeks as brown as a berry,
Hair black as raven's wing, eyes like the dove,

Her pouting red lips rivalled the cherry,—
But she !"—“ No, father, I'll hear no more,
I am jealous, and jealous of Theodore.”

XVII.

So matters stood on the Christmas Eve
I would pause at. The baronet would scarce believe
But that Hubert's passion would fade away,
As fades the mist 'neath the sun's strong ray.
But when days, and weeks, and months flew by,
And still Hubert heaved the soul-deep sigh,
And still his thoughts tended Lucy-ward—
As was told by each gesture, each scornful word
To Theodore,—then the baronet
Looked on Theodore too with a sort of hate,
Or rather envy, for Hubert's sake ;
And, one would have thought, strove to awake

Bitter feelings in Theodore's soul.
And sometimes his feelings would scorn control,
And in his look, his tone,—aye, more—
In his words, he'd show envy of Theodore.

XVIII.

This Christmas Eve, all sat in The Limes,
(Save Lucy,) talking of by-gone times.
Hubert sat from the others apart,
Feasting on envy his sullen heart.
The baronet saw him, and then his gaze
Fell on Theodore's beaming face ;
And, (judge him not harshly, 'tis hard to see
One whom you love torn with jealousy !)
He said in low tone to Theodore,
“ You've well nigh now reached the happy shore
Of love consummate ; but, proverbs say—
And, boy, few things are more true than they—
That—betwixt the cup and the ready lip,
There's many an undreamt-of, hope-crushing slip.

XIX.

“ When I was a youth I loved to stray
From home and kindred far away,—
Not solely from the love of travelling,
But in the fond hope of unravelling

Some of the dense cobweb of mystery
That overhangs the page of history :
And thereby I thought with deathless fame
T' associate the De Horne name.
Once in my grasp I seemed to hold
All I sought for,—to have, uncontrolled,
A mine of treasures of art and wonder
Ev'n at my beck ; when lo ! one blunder,
Irreparable, snatched them from my sight,
And consigned them again to the realms of night.
'Twas thus :"—and with air of boyish grace,
Which banished the envy from his face,
The baronet told his story ; and now
The vicar, and Hubert with clouded brow,
Listen to him. The tale's not long,
And I have wed it to my rough song :—

XX.

Sir Hubert's Tale.

" I wandered away to Peru,
That land at the set of the sun ;
That strange far land, whose story was told
Ere our own isle's tale had begun.

I had read of the mighty pyramids
That rise in this far-off land ;
I had wondered much of the kings that ruled
Ere Columbus and his band
Had dreamt of a span to the western main,
A shore to the western sea ;
Ere Amerigo had launched his bark
With his comrades brave and free ;
Long ere Atabaliba,
Sitting on his golden throne,
By the Spaniard's craft had been deceived,
And hurled by his treachery down.
I had longed to visit the country
Of the people strange and old ;
And now the dream would be fulfilled
Which I dreamt on Southbury Wold.
I set out from Lima's city,
The *Villa de los Reyes*,
And I travelled towards the northern pole
For many weary days :
But ah ! my toil was all repaid,
My way-worn feet grew whole,
When, rising fair 'gainst the azure sky,
I saw the wished-for goal.

XXI.

“It was a quaint old pyramid :
 Strange devices were there,
Sculptured on stones that for ages had lain,
 Tell me how long—who dare ?
No man knows how long they have lain ;
 No man can tell what they say :
Perchance strange stories are told by them
 Of a long-forgotten day.
I stood on the top of the pyramid
 And looked around. Below
Lay the deep Peruvian forests,
 Steeped in the sun’s red glow ;
And I thought of the queer old fable
 Of the offspring of the sun,
That lost Peru to its Indian lords :
 Thus did the fable run :—
An Inca’s son saw a phantom once,
 An unknown beast he led ;
A bushy beard his face adorned ;
 His legs were covered !—
(Unlike the people of his land—

Their legs and chins were bare ;)
And the phantom spoke to the Inca's son,
Told him in words full fair
He was the Virachoca great,
The offspring of the sun.
And when the bearded Spaniards came,
With horse, with hose, with gun,
The Indians thought they saw in them
The brethren of that ghost :
And they willingly bowed to the conquerors
And so—their land was lost.

XXII.

“ I stood on the top of the pyramid,
Musing thus on the past,
My guide had gone down before me
And I was alone. At last
I saw from the top of the pyramid
That the sun was sinking low ;
No more were the ancient forests
Steeped in his crimson glow.
So I threw my musings to the wind,
And 'gan the steep descent ;
But still upon the carvings quaint
My eager eyes I bent.

One stone, whose cabalistic signs
Were wondrous to behold,
I paused to view,—I touched, and lo !
Back, and still back, it rolled,
Disclosing to my wondering gaze
A dark dim cavity,
With a winding staircase in the midst ;
And I shouted aloud in glee :
' Ha ! ha ! ' I laughed on the evening air,
' Here is a feast untold !
I'll be as great as I dreamt I would,
A boy on Southbury Wold !
I'll give to the world a wondrous tale
Of this ancient pyramid,
And the mysteries hid in its bosom old ' ;—
So I shouted for my guide.

XXIII.

" Cautiously, fearfully, crept we two—
My guide and I down the stair ;
The torchlight's flash had a weirdly tinge,
A ghastly, deathlike glare.
Lower, still lower, down we crept,

The air grew dank and foul ;
My guide crept closer to my side—
He feared some unknown ghoul.
The echoes wakened by our feet
Fell sullenly on our ears ;
And all was lonely, weird, and sad.
But lo ! our growing fears
Were banished, swift as the sun dispels
The morning mist from the earth,
By the glorious sight that burst on our view :
A chamber, whose vast girth
My sense overwhelmed, before us lay,
And, in the torchlight's glimmer,
It seemed hung round with precious gems,
Some brighter, and some dimmer.
Niches were left in the lofty walls
Of that hall of long-past fame,
And an Inca sat in every niche ;
On each brow a diadem
Was set. Their eyes were diamonds,
They sat on golden thrones,
They looked so real, I could scarce believe
They were not living ones.

XXIV.

“ But never a word the Incas spoke
Never a look they gave ;
They were but dried-up mummies I saw,
Powerless to hurt or save.
Yet I felt a strange loathing come o’er me
Thus to be left with them,
Even tho’ I knew they were mummies,
And each eye was a precious gem.
A sickening feeling took hold of me,
There in the dead men’s hall,
And I signed to my guide to be going ;
But he heeded me not at all.
Avarice, mighty soul-stirrer,
Made him see nought but the gold,—
Nought but the gold and the diamonds ;
Avarice made him grow bold.
He had clambered up to the niches
Where the Incas sat in state :
Down with a crash fell one of them—
(I thought with a look of hate
On his leathern face—but it could not be)

Putting my torchlight out,
Crushing himself to a powder ;
Then did my brave guide shout
With terror, and I rushed upwards,
Out of the dead men's sight,
Till I saw heaven's vault above me—
Dim in the evening light.
I seemed to faint ; for I know no more
Till I woke when the stars were out,
Shining calm on my guide and me ;
And when we looked about,
My guide and I, for the carven stone
That leads to the dead men's hall,
We knew it not from its neighbour stones,—
We found it never at all.

XXV.

“ Yes, though for days and weeks I tried
To find that carv'n stone in the pyramid—
Closed when, in heedless haste, we rushed
From the fallen Inca's harmless dust—
We never found it. And so my hopes
Dissolved like fickle, sand-woven ropes ;

And your hopes may." But he said no more
For Lucy leaned over Theodore.

XXVI.

'Twas strange that his words should fall so deep
In Theodore's breast, that he could not sleep ;
'Twas strange that as rolled the hours away,
Bringing ever nearer the Christmas Day,
Theodore could not rest, but still
There rang in his ears his hope's death-knell.
He looked from the window—Diana's car,
Followed by many a lovely star,
Was tracking the bright ethereal path,
Bathing the rocks in a silver bath ;
There all was peace. He looked at the wood ;—
The trees like goblin sentinels stood ;
And there, like a mitred bishop, lo !
Rose the church tower o'er the shapes below,—
(The church which for ages has stood, and will stand,
On a hillock which rises out from the plain,
As that proud red rock, Heligoland,
Uprears its head from the northern main).
All was peaceful. How different far
From that night of elemental war,

When, twenty long, long years ago,
L'Etoile de la Mer drove on the Spaniard's Stone.

XXVII.

Theodore thought on that night, and wept,
Then softly to the cabinet crept,
Which the things he loved most called their home ;
Where none but Theodore might come.
There letters betraying the pen of a girl,
Lay thick. And volumes, some torn and old,
Some gaily bound and lettered with gold,
Confusedly lay. Here a shining curl
Marked some well-loved line in a book.
And from the farthest in, hidden nook
The storm-tossed velvet mantle he drew,
The mantle of sea-dimmed, wave-spoiled blue,
And, holding it where the moon's soft light,
The lovely moonbeams—mildly bright—
In radiance wrapped it, he wept the more,
And sad thoughts coursed the brain of Theodore.

XXVIII.

“ Oh, mantle ! ” he thought—but did not say—
“ Would that thou hadst the gift of memory ! ”

Then thou might'st tell of my mother, perchance,
Of my home in the realms of sunny France.
Thou might'st tell how 'twas that, with Marie,
I was wrecked on the rocks of Southbury.
But what avail my poor thoughts ? for lo !
Where my fathers dwelt, I shall never know.
And yet, if Lucy may be my bride,
I shall bless the fierce tempestuous tide
That wrecked me. Does Hubert love her too,
And I, my sole riches this mantle blue,
Would I compete, nay, the victory gain
Over him—I, a waif saved from the main
By his father's aid ? Unjust does't seem ?
Nay—banish the hideous phantom dream
That snatches sweet Lucy from my view.
Sole relic of home,—adieu ! adieu !”

XXIX.

Hush ! what was that soft sweet melody
Borne on the calm still Christmas air ?
What strains were thus rising joyously ?
Now they came nearer—still more near.

Ah ! oft before had Theodore
 Heard the glad children carolling
On Christmas morns, but, ne'er before,
 Thought he did they so sweetly sing.
Gladly the clear loud tenors rang,
And this was the carol that they sang.

1.

When, on the first Christmas morn,
Our Redeemer Christ was born,
 Did His couch with diamonds shine ?
In a palace was He laid ?
Were royal honours to Him paid ?
 No, He lay 'mongst lowing kine.

2.

But His nation, when they heard
He was born, their prince, their lord
 Long-expected—did they joy ?
No, but from the east afar,
Led by a God-guided star,
 Came three grey-bearded magi ;
Laden with pure gold of Ophir,
Laden, too, with gem-decked coffer
 Full of spices for the boy.

3.

When to manhood's years He grew,
Surely then the blinded Jew

Crowned and set Him on a throne ?
Aye, with crown of thorns they crowned Him,
Wrapped a purple robe around Him,—
Mockery was in their tone ;
For a throne, a cross they raised,
There, on high, their King they placed,
God and Mary's well-loved Son.

4.

But when our dear Christ was dead,
Surely then all hatred fled

And their slaughtered King was wept ?
No, but veiled the bright sun saw
His death ;—earth looked on with awe,
Quaked, and lo ! from graveyard crept
Gravecloth clad, but fresh and blooming,
As tho' rank death's power consuming
Had gone, forms that long had slept.

5.

And we in a far-off clime,
At the blessèd Christmas time

Do we mourn for dear Christ slain ?
No, we joy ; for by His death,
Those who see their Prince by faith,
His bright kingdom, Heaven, may gain.

XXX.

Now on the night wind the carol died ;
And sleep's winged brother, magic-fingered,
Closed Theodore's eyes. But still he sighed ;
And in his bosom still there lingered
The baronet's envy-urgèd warning :
For heaven's sweet empress, till the morning,
Looked on him tossing to and fro,
Turning and moaning, even as tho'
Some nightmare sat enthroned on his breast,
Some ivory-gate phantom of unrest.

XXXI.

The morn broke like those described by Homer,
With rosy fingers, tipped with amber ;
More like a morn towards the close of summer,
Than one in dreary, dark December :
Just such a morn as such morn should be,
Not a breeze ruffled the wide-spread sea,

Peace and good-will seemed breathed by that morn—
Peace was far from the breast of Hubert de Horne.
He, when the bells for service out-pealed,
 Wandered far into the hazel wood.
'Twas well indeed that he should be concealed,
 For his soul was wrapped in a loathsome mood :
Black envy, and hate, and wrath combined
Were this morning the food of Hubert's mind.

XXXII.

Hubert climbed up the old ruined stair
 Of the ruined castle, and there sat down
On the ruined battlement, from whence
 Southbury church and Southbury town
Were seen, embosomed in leafless trees,
And the bay unruffled by gentlest breeze ;
And now his fury, and his fierce woe,
Solitude oped the flood-gates to.

XXXIII.

“ Oh ! blessèd, cursèd, hated, yet loved day,
That gave me heaven, perchance, but lost Lucy !
Why smooth-faced bay, whose strand the De Hornes own,
Didst thou wreck him upon the Spaniard's Stone

Who, rescued in ill-starred and hateful hour,
Has proved that false French faces have a power
O'er English faces to an English girl ;
Whose brow, bedecked by the jet-black curl,
Is broader none than mine, nor whose eye
Than mine beams brighter can I descry.
Is't that he pleads more warmly than I ?
Or is it—oh ! Lucy, tell me, tell !
For suspense is a creature of lowest hell,
And he who never has had to prove
The subtle moving power of love,
Knows not suspense ; oh ! Lucy, say !
Because he's to be vicar of Southbury
Do you love him ? And I, in the morn
Of life, who will be Sir Hubert de Horne,
Doubtless, ere manhood's bright years pass by,—
Why not love me ? Lucy, tell me why !

XXXIV.

“ Methinks th' insatiate gnawing pain
That ceases but to gnaw again—
The deathless worm ; the fire that never
Its fierce tongue from the damned can sever ;

The furious devils ever mocking ;
The breast-hid monitor's soft knocking,
(Soft—but, they say, the drop of water
Continuous falling, works man's slaughter,
Though first his reason's power assailing ;)—
Yea, methinks these are unavailing
As figures of the soul's deep anguish,
Beneath which I must droop and languish,
When I think on what would have been,
Had he, by you, oh ! Lucy ! ne'er been seen."

XXXV.

So, wrapped in envious thoughts, hours flew by
O'er Hubert ; and still he sat on high.
Out of the old Norman church on the hill
The villagers pour, with seemly tread
Pass the ruined, worn-out windmill,
Nor pause till their own roof-tree over their head,
Glistening with the Yule-log's bright gleam,
Mingled with Sol's red December beam,
Told them, as well as the tongue could say,
"The fire's the best flower in the garden to-day."

XXXVI.

Theodore only did not go home :
Still o'er his heart hung a sort of gloom,
A feeling of some impending doom.
And it was with measured step, and slow,
 He paced 'mongst the leafless hazel trees.
But what makes him towards the ruin go ?
 Is it that on the top he sees
That figure ? Pause, pause, Theodore !
Oh ! turn your steps ! Like the fated shore
Cyclopean to Ulysses sage,
Where, by the giant Polypheme's rage,
His comrades fell—is that ruin to you.
Nay, must you—must you onward go ?
Well, man cannot see what *may* befall,
If he could, few woes would hap at all.

XXXVII.

And so, fate-driven, as heathen would say,
Theodore wandered on moodily ;
And, scarce thinking where he went, he clomb
The ruin. Oh ! that he'd been at home !
For envy-fed Hubert's eye gleamed fierce,
As tho' he would to his marrow pierce ;

Hate from the edge of his eyelids glanced,
Hate curled his lips with ineffable scorn ;—
Hate o'er his features flickered and danced,
Hate on this love-bearing Christmas morn !

XXXVIII.

“ Hubert,” said Theodore, “ why here alone ?
Why art thou sad this dear Christmas day ?
Hubert, twenty long years ago,
I was wrecked in Southbury Bay.
Twenty long years we have grown up together,
Like brothers, Hubert, we've ever been ;
And, Hubert, can you tell me whether
The red setting sun has ever seen,
When taking his last long look at the earth,
Our features wrath-red 'gainst each other ?
Never I think since my ocean birth
Has't been so,—say, has it, brother ?

XXXIX.

“ And yet, dear Hubert, for months your brow,
When I approach you, has clouded o'er ;
You never deign to speak to me now,
But aye turn away from Theodore.

Strange glances, Hubert, now fire your eye ;
And, Hubert, methinks—tho' I know not why—
You love me not now as you used to do,
And that, dear Hubert, not long ago.
Is't that I chide you when you stray,
As you sometimes do, from high virtue's way ?
Unworthy were I of the name of friend,
Could I see your errant footsteps tend,
How little soe'er, down the path of death,
Without showing th' abyss that yawns beneath !

XL.

“ Or is it, Hubert, that by the Cam,
In courting the blue-eyed knowledge dame,
I bear the poor palm from you away ?
No, Hubert, I do not think you envy
Your friend for that ; you who have land,
And wealth, aye honour, at your command.
Or is it ?—but no, that cannot be ”—
“ Aye—now you enter the lists with me ;—
Say on, say on,—Is't that your glance,
Instinct with the love-darts of sunny France
Has, aided by treachery and guile,
By warm French thought, by Frankish smile,

Won—yea, snatched from me—she who should
Have been my bride ? I have often stood
Where the light hazel's grateful shadow
Leaves, on the sultriest summer day,
A cool retreat, athwart the meadow,
And seen a youth and maiden stray.
I've seen them pluck the blue-starred flower
That grows by brink of the woodland stream,
That says ' Forget not ; ' many an hour
I've seen them wander, lost in love's dream.
I've heard the youth the maid compare
To all that man has e'er called fair.
I've seen the crimson blushes rise.
I've seen love's glances fire their eyes.
I've watched the ardent, glowing boy
With the sweet maiden's ringlets toy,
Twining them around his finger.
When the eve fell, still they'd linger ;
Then came the whispered soft love-vow :
And the sweet girl was, Lucy, thou !
And the hot boy was, Theodore, thou !

XLI.

“ And yet you would ask me why I seem
To hate you ! Great heavens ! could you dream
That your rival might be still your friend !
When rivalry steps in, love must end.
Say not you knew not I loved the maiden—
Why blush, Theodore ? why should you redden ?
I loved her (oh that love should prove
So dangerous to those that love !)
So passionately that hell I'd scorn,
If she might be with Hubert de Horne.
You shudder at my words. What are you ?
A boy possessing a mantle blue ;
A stray saved from some Frankish deck,
Nameless, homeless, parentless ;
Yet *you* are suffered my hopes to wreck !
You are to work a De Horne distress !
Perchance thy father's some galley slave,
One of the vilest scum of the earth ;
Perchance thy dam's virtue had a grave,
Broad and deep, dug by thy curst birth :
Whilst I—” “ Hubert, wrong yourself no more,
'Tis your own name you're blasting, not that of Theodore.”

XLII.

He had frowned at Hubert's sad complaining ;
Yet pitied. As when Luna, waning,
A doubtful light o'er Terra flings,

And darkness strives to claim the night,—
So, in his eyes, the mirky wings

Of wrath sat flapping, while the light,
The tender light of pity, shining,

From the dark orbs the wrath scarce banished,
Yet tinged its wings with silver lining,

At first but little ; then wrath vanished
And pity, in his radiant eye,
Shone, like the full moon in the sky.

XLIII.

“ Hubert, I love you scarce a whit less

Than my own priceless soul I care for ;
Aye, Hubert, an had I loved you less

You had loved me more ; I love you, therefore,
An Lucy (whom I love with such love

As Petrarch for his Laura exprest)—
An Lucy did love you, I would prove

My love for both,—and coldly drest—

Tho' at heart burning—in indiff'rence
(Seeming—not real), to th' outward sense
Of all, have offered as sacrifice
To love for you—I, whom you despise !
My love for Lucy,—and seen you twain—
Whom I love—happy. And what tho' pain
Smote me ? On my heart, time would impress—
Time, the reliever of every distress—
His powers oblivious, kind, soothing powers,
None sweeter methinks, brother, in this world of ours.
But Lucy loves you not, and you know—
Aye, you know well, brother, that 'tis so ;
And yet from him she loves you would claim—
So David took, Hubert, the 'one ewe lamb'—
Her plighted troth. Well, Hubert, I grieve
That your passions your nobler soul should deceive."

XLIV.

The eyes of an uproused angry lion
Are bright as the stars in the belt of Orion ;
The hiss of an adder is awful to hear
Close by your just awakened ear.
With such a hiss, with just such a look,
Hubert sprang to his feet, his whole frame shook

With rage ; and, fixing his burning eyne
Full on Theodore's calmer mien,
He spoke—" Go, false-souled Frenchman, go—
'Tis well to mock at another's woe ;
Aye, tis fitting to mock, tho' that other,
Echo still says, you called your brother.
Go, Theodore, your pity I scorn ;
Go, or perchance, this Christmas morn
May see my hands in your blood imbrued.
Less taunts than yours have raised the feud
Which, through the bounds of tolerance burst,
Generations unborn have cursed ;
Which has mocked the furious tiger's rage,
Given story to the historic page,
Doomed babes to slaughter. Go, Frankish boy,
And taste the boy-praised, poet-sung joy,
Of love. But in your hour of bliss,
When Lucy returns the burning kiss,
And heaven seems earth-bound, think thou this,—
' This joy's made sweeter by Hubert's woe,
Once my dear friend, now my hated foe.' "

XLV.

A strange glance play'd in Theodore's eye,
As thus to Hubert he made reply,
" 'Tis not so yet, dear Hubert ; God knows
I shall mourn the day that sees us foes.
I feel a justice in your urged claim,
Even tho' it is for my one ewe lamb.
Well had it been had Southbury Bay
Held my blanched bones this Christmas day !
Ah ! well said your father, ' There's many a slip
'Tween the upheld cup and the ready lip.'
But yesterday I seemed, thro' my hope,
To be sipping the nectar in the cup :
And lo ! to-day !"—But now Theodore
Paused, for his dark eyes were running o'er ;
The briny river was coursing his cheek,
Sobs rent his breast as tho' they would break
His o'er full heart, and he could not speak.

XLVI.

But one strong effort checked the salt flood,
Then calm, and dignified, Theodore stood :

"Hear me, Hubert, and then I go,
Hear me, then call me friend or foe.
I've read of those whom the world's cruel spite
Has driven to become cold eremite :
Whom faithless maids, or wrecked hopes, have driven,
As last resource, to make peace with heaven.
I will not seek some cold mountain cell
But still in the haunts of men will dwell :
But, Hubert, thou need'st fear no more
The Frankish wiles of Theodore.
Think, Hubert, these twenty years you've dreamed,
That Theodore was not, only seemed
To be, a phantom by troubled brain
Called up. Forget, dear Hubert, the pain
You have felt : for far hence will I wander,
To my own land, perchance, and die,
Far from Lucy, aye, Hubert, far
From the splendour of her azure eye."

XLVII.

With calm, clear voice, with eyes dilate,
As when ghost-fearing peasants stray,
At the hour when twilight's mantle grey
Enwraps the earth, near the churchyard gate,

And the tombstone seems a goblin grim,—
So wide dilated the eye, still dim
With tears, of Theodore. Hubert smiled
Incredulously ; but still more mild
Were the words he uttered, than before,
When scoffing, jeering at Theodore.

XLVIII.

“ Yes, Theodore, so you say just now,
And, to look at the unimpassioned brow
You wear, one would think you mean it too :
But wait till that tender eye of blue
Meets yours, and floods of rapture roll,
Ygazing, thro’ your youthful soul ;
Then, Theodore, this hour forgot,
The tale you now tell you’ll say was not.”

XLIX.

“ What, Hubert !”—“ Theodore, depart,
Sad enough is my lonely heart,
Without your vain words.” He turned away.
“ But, Hubert !”—a word I will not say
Passes the portals of Hubert’s lips,—
His better feelings all suffer eclipse.

He turns, and, thinking not where they stand,
With his hate-mastered, strengthful hand,
He spurns him from him, nor looks around—
Great God ! what makes the still air resound,
As tho' some heavy weight did fall ?
Ah ! 'tis some stone from the ruined wall,
The ruined battlement has given way,
And, falling on the cold, moistened clay,
Made that dull thud. Was that a groan ?
You never hear the dull, senseless stone
Complain when fallen. Hubert looked o'er
The battlement ; on the ground lay Theodore !

CANTO III.

THE CAIN.

I.

When the sin-paved path Red Murder had trodden,
And Cain as first high priest of his rites
Initiated ; and when Foul Envy
(Which more than all other fiends incites
To murder) had so tinged his willing mind,
That Murder's promptings were sweet to his ear ;
And when, for first time, human life was ta'en,—
Dost thou think Cain stood by the earthy bier
Of his brother without reproaches keen
Smiting his heart ? without vain regret,
Long train of memories floating by ?
Doubtless not so : for his soul not yet

Was callous ; as when, in these modern days,

The red-browed murderer, with jaunty air,
Goes to the gallows, nor seems to think

That, in the wide world, no thing's so fair
As the image of God, which he in his wrath,

Or, it may be, for sake of paltry gain,
Has erased, cancelled, said, " Fade away " to ;
What God had said, " Live " to—he has slain.

II.

And Hubert de Horne, this Christmas Day,

As he stood by Theodore's senseless form
And saw his life-blood flowing away,—

Felt his forehead with life still warm,—
Looked on his weary, blank, vacant eye,

The poor crushed arm, the broken limb ;
Did he hate him now ? How willingly

Would Hubert de Horne have changed places with him !

III.

He did not weep, he did not rave :

But the twitching lips and eyes confessed
(The passions' tell-tales) how deep he felt ;

And his soul-agony impressed

Its outward signet on his brow,
His trembling hand, his trembling frame,
Silent he stood awhile, but then
The horror-stricken accents came.

IV.

“ Oh ! God ! am I indeed a wretch
With the plague-spot of murder blackening my name ?
Am I that cursed thing a murderer ?
Oh can it be that such I am ?
And what's a murderer ? Is my shape
More dreadful, since, with this cursèd hand,
I pushed him over the battlement ?
On my brow is there traced some well-known brand,
Which all who meet me may point to
And say, ‘ Avoid him, his friend he slew ? ’

V.

“ Scarce so. And tho' I slew him, yet I
Willed not to slay him : but well I know
That the feelings in my black heart up-pent,
Which found expression an hour ago,—
An hour ! not that,—when he was alive ;—

Is he dead ? It may be he only faints,
And pictures of what might be ;—nay are,—
He is dead, and what my fancy paints
Is real ;—the expressions that passed my lips
Were murder—murder a thousand times o'er.
And yet it was not premeditate :
Premeditate murder is black far more
Than mere man-slaughter ;—aye call it so,
My heart says 'twas murder—murder ! no !
This pure white hand is not red ; no stain
Of blood crimsons it. What is this ? Gore ?
Aye, when I passed my fingers o'er
His bruised forehead, this mark was ta'en :
But then I am bloody—a man of blood—
A heavy, cursèd name, Oh ! God !

VI.

“ But why do I not go for help ? I go ;—
Nay I go not,—my heart says ‘ No.’
I cannot look on my father’s face ;
His haughty eye would see the trace
Of murder clearly writ on my brow.
My heart would quail 'neath the vicar’s eye ;
And Lucy ! Lucy ! thy agony,

Thy shriek of woe,—how, Hubert ! how
Might you hear that ? No, thy lot's mine
Oh ! first of murderers. Far from his kin,
To the land of Nod, the wandering land,
Unbounded by furthest ocean's strand,—
For the land of Nod's the whole wide world,—
Hubert de Horne by his passions is hurled."

VII.

Thus said, (strange act for a murderer to do !)—

He imprinted on Theodore's brow a kiss :
And then his laments broke forth anew.

But the poet may hurry over this
Dark scene, and only tell that he,
Deeming Theodore to be surely dead,
And urged by fears, that the murderer alone
Knows in perfection,—turned and fled.

VIII.

Fled ! " 'Twas a senseless thing to do,"—

With ear prophetic I hear some say ;
" Why did he not on fear's wings fly,
To not far distant Southbury

For aid ? He might have known the soul
The but-bruised body does not forsake
So soon." The poet's a chronicler,
And, as things happed, so he must make
His story run ; tho' he interweaves
In the garland variegated leaves
That to the woven flowers do not belong,
But still enhance the garland-like song.

IX.

He fled ; and aimless fled. It were vain
To tell the feelings that reigned in his breast :
For who, that has not shed blood, can know ?
Let this suffice : a most fierce unrest
Hurried his step, and gnawed at his soul,
Bade him press on to some unknown goal,—
Sisyphean task ! for the goal was peace ;
And how might a murderer's soul find ease !
A murderer true ; but he was none :
For scarce from Theodore had he gone,
When trem'ulous motions through the frame,
And sighs that told the vital flame
Was dimmed—not snuffed out—seen and heard,
Revival's forerunners appeared.

X.

Meantime the twain at home were missed.
And when the sun the ocean kissed
And still they came not, wonderingly
The vicar eyed the closing day,
Theodoreless : for from the side
Of her who was to be his bride,
Not oft absent was Theodore
So long. And when the evening o'er
The ocean placed the first bright star,
The first dear heavenly wanderer,
He could endure suspense no more,
But went in quest of Theodore.

XI.

And Hubert was missing too ! 'Twas strange !
But it seemed stranger, stranger far,
When all the beaming ones were out
That nightly follow Diana's car.
Then blank uneasiness to dim dread
Gave place ; and even the baronet said,
'Twas strange. The vicar the village thro'
Inquired : but where they were no one knew.

XII.

Deep in the soul a strange feeling reigns,
A sort of wonderful, wild instinct.
Some say so strong are its mystic chains
That the corpse-leaving soul 'twill show distinct,
To some one that passing soul loved well.
It may be so ; but its lesser power
Oft warns the soul of a coming hour
Of woe ; and oftentimes will tell,
In a weird whisper soft and low,
Some spot where the unquiet one must go.
And Lucy, when her father had gone
In search of her lover, and she was alone,
Felt eerie and sad. By the window she stood,
Whence she could see the dark hazel wood ;
And the wild thought flitted thro' her brain,—
What if her Theodore were slain ?

XIII.

She wraps a mantle around her form :
Diana, shield the dear maid from harm !
Where goes she ? Flickering in the blue eyne,
What may that weirdly wild flash mean ?

Where does she fly thus, as thou, Dian !
Once from the lewd-souled Alpheus ran ?
Towards the ruin. Oh ! queen of heaven !
To whom to o'erlook this world 'tis given,
Say what was that wild despairing shriek ?
It drove the blood from the vicar's cheek ;
So wild, it might have been an echo
From the Stygian lake below.
It roused the villagers with a start ;
Penetrated to every heart ;
Aghast they cry, " What may that be
Breaking the peace of Southbury ? "

XIV.

" It came from the wood ? " — " Aye, from the wood. "

" Something is wrong, neighbour ; shall we go ? "

" Aye, if you will. " Thus they musing stood.

But who was that 'mongst the hazels ? " Ho ! "
The murderer, perchance ; (for that shriek might well
Of some foul deed of murder tell.)

" 'Twere well to follow. " But fleetier far
Than the followers' feet, the flying one's are.
He stops at the ruin. On, on they push ;
And into the vicar's arms they rush :—

For he it is. And lo ! his blue eye
Seems fixed upon blank vacancy.
Even as they looked, he swooned and fell,
On—ah ! on what ! how may the poet tell ?

XV.

A gory figure in moonbeams swathed :
A maiden in the red gore-stream bathed.
His face was pale, save where the flood
Whose fount's the heart, the river of blood,
Had coursed his cheeks, its banks o'erflowed.
His dimmed dark eye seemed to betoken
That the silver cord of life was broken.
Her hair—her tresses like skeins of gold
Were tinged with crimson. Her wild look told
Of deep despair. Her arms were flung
Around his neck ; aye, as close she clung,
As the ivy clings to the ruin hoar,
About the bruised form of Theodore !

XVI.

So sad the scene, no wonder they stand
In silent contemplation wrapt.
Now whispers circle around the band,
They trembling ask how it may have hapt.

But who might tell them ? Not he, his tongue
Was fettered, it seemed, by death's cold chain :
Not she, tho' so fair, and ah ! so young,
Perchance she might never speak word again.
And the vicar ? Lo ! he to life returns,
In his eye the light of reason burns ;
He smiles—yea, smiles—" Friends, bear them home,
Oh ! Death, sharp-sickled, wilt thou not come
For me too ? True I'm not young, nor fair,
As those thou hast ta'en but this morning were ;
But, reaper ! I'm bared for the stroke. God forgive
My wandering soul, but 'tis hard to live
In this world alone." And the villagers bore
The twain to the village, as years before,
They had borne drowned Marie and Theodore.

XVII.

The grey morn peered into Lucy's chamber,
More like a morn in wintry December
Than yester morn. And she is not dead ;
For this is she in her own pure bed.
Scarcely ruffled her features seem ;
Tho' a look, such as one wears on waking from dream
Of terror, is wandering in her eye.

She speaks,—“ But Theodore, tell me how
You got that strange red mark on your brow ?
And why on the cold ground should you lie ?
Theodore, darling, you must go home.—
Theodore ! Theodore ! what, art thou dumb ?
Will you not speak to Lucy, your love,
She who loves you all things above ?
Theodore ! Theodore ! where am I now ?
What is that strange red mark on your brow ?”

XVIII.

Thus her words wandered. Her mind seemed cleft—
The only memory in her mind left
Was Theodore, blood-stained, on the cold earth.—
He, when the dawn peeped into his room,
Was in thought in his early Frankish home ;
In the tongue that doubtless greeted his birth
Thoughts delirious found expression.
Now, at the fever height of passion,
He raved ; anon his troubled breast
Seemed to find a transient rest.
Three days 'twixt life and death he hung,
The fourth—found quiet and the Saxon tongue.

XIX.

“Is Hubert here? The stones gave way;
'Twas not his fault. Is this Christmas Day?
Why hangs that gloom o'er the vicar's brow?
Father, I'll not be long ailing now.
But where is Hubert? And Lucy—she's well?
I'm glad she was not by when I fell.
But why weep now? May dear Lucy come
To see me awhile?” Is the vicar dumb?
And lo! the big tear-drops downward roll,
The fruit borne by agony of soul.

XX.

The tale was told, and Theodore
Wept not. They led Lucy in to him:
With a curious look she scanned him o'er:—
“Why is your once bright eye so dim?
Theodore, love, how pale you seem!
Oh I have had a terrible dream!
I dreamt,—but why are you lying in bed?
I dreamt, my love, you were cold and dead;
Cold and dead, gory and red:
An you were dead we should never be wed,

But I dreamt for an altar we had a tombstone,
And, though you were dead, they made me wed,
And the parson was a grim skeleton,
And skulls lay thick at the parson's feet ;—
Theodore, love, 'twas a blithe conceit."

XXI.

And she laughed, if you might call it so ;—
But was it laughter ?—Laughter ! No.
The cold blue eye caught never a sparkle,
Not a ripple of mirth, nor even a darkle
Of woe. 'Twas the maniac's Ha ! ha ! ha !
And who might hear that sound without awe ?
Theodore shuddered ; they led her away—
And he went on towards recovery,—
But she was the same for many a day.

XXII.

Missing Hubert ! Ah ! Theodore laid
But lightly the blame on the absent one's head.
The baronet's wrath that Hubert should shame
The De Horne's till then unsullied name
Was fierce. Weeks passed, and never a word
Of the self-exiled one was heard.

XXIII.

When the spring said, "Flowers, you must waken up,
See I have driven old winter afar.

Where is your bright chalice—buttercup ?

And, primrose ! where is your paler star ?

Trees ! you must don your mantles green,

Your liveries bright of verdant sheen ;

And skies ! you must do your best to smile

Even in this cold Anglo-Saxon isle."

When—spring-bid—the first primrose reared its head,
Lucy had faded away—was dead.

XXIV.

Dead ! dead ! 'tis a sad-toned word ;

How many hearts has the sound of it broken ?

To how many souls has death's home-striking sword

Been for life-long dreariness the token ?

I know a sad chant from fair Italy,

Perchance poured forth by some love-sick swain,

Perchance crushed out of some weary soul

Writhing in hidden, suppressed, deep pain :—

“Gone is she? Ah my soul

Say not so.

Tell that heaven and earth are passing;

Ay, tell of death his bright sword flashing;

But that she, my own, is dashing

From my lips the cup of passion

By her death,—Ah! no. Ah! no,—

By her death, ah! no.”

And 'tis ever so. Let the whole world die

Save the ones we love, and never a whisper

Of sorrow is heard: at the hour of vesper

Let their souls in death's weird chariot fly,—

And—“Never was death so cruel before;”—

So thought the vicar and Theodore.

Ah! how they missed the blank blue eye,

Tho' oft-times its blankness had made them sigh.

XXV.

Days passed. The violets in forest glade

Were blooming; and 'neath the hazel's shade

Anemones peeped. The earth was glad;

Theodore's soul was gloomy and sad:

The vicar was grief-bowed: the baronet,

A desolate man, was it strange he should fret?

Scarce so. One morning the desolate look
Seemed to fade from his face, as fades from the brook
The shadow that's left by the flying cloud ;
And it was with accents humble, not proud,
That he whispered these words to Theodore :—
“ A letter from Hubert at San Salvador.”

XXVI.

Yes, San Salvador ! This was Hubert's tale :—
When he fled from Theodore blood-stained and pale,
He goalless fled. But the fierce thought came,
The red-browed one has not only shame
But vengeance to flee from ; and where should he fly ?
Ah ! Hubert sighed, “ It were well to die ! ”

XXVII.

But then a thought came like a lightning flash :
Far far away at San Salvador,
Were some comrades of his, who a project rash
Had formed ;—forsooth their feet would explore
The unexplored lands 'neath the Kumri hills,
Whose soil had never a Briton's foot borne ;
And eagerly had they wooed as leader
Of their gay party—Hubert de Horne.

But he had refused to go with them. Now
How sweet the wild project seemed to his ear !
That they might have started ere he could reach
San Salvador, was his only fear.

XXVIII.

He sailed. They had not gone. The glad shout
That welcomed him brightened his soul so dreary.
His presence put all their fears to the rout :—
“ Hubert,” they said, “ Our leader you’ll be ? ”
“ Aye ” said he ; but aside, “ Did you know
’Twas a murderer you followed, how many would go ? ”
Thence Hubert had written home. The tone
Of his letter was penitent,—“ Father,” he said
“ This letter is written by your sad son,
Whom alas ! you must look upon as dead.
Strive not to find me : for on a wild track,
Whence, it may be, I may never come back,
I go. Oh ! father, if grief may atone
For errors, my faults are buried each one.”
When the letter was read to Theodore
He mused :—“ I must seek him at Salvador,
As soon as my broken limbs are whole ;—
The sight of me—how it will ease his soul ! ”

XXIX.

And now the day came when Hubert de Horne,
With his gay companions two or three,
Was to set out. 'T was a glorious morn,
Not a breeze ruffled the wide-spread sea ;
Scarce a cloud was seen in the azure sky :
And their breasts—save Hubert's—were just as calm ;
They whistled and carolled right merrily,
As if o'er them waved their fathers' flags,
As if round them fair English cities stood,—
When, for the last time, tho' they knew it not,
From Salvador they saw Congo's flood.

XXX.

An old grey man with an eagle eye
Viewed the adventurous smiling group.
'T was cruel to breathe the merest word
That should damp their ardent buoyant hope :—
Yet he said, “ Boys, I have traversed all Europe ;
Palestine too has my footprints seen—
I have knelt at the holy sepulchre ;
Have gazed on the face of Austria's bold queen ;

From the Caspian sea to rough Biscay's bay,
From the Northern Cape to the Dardanelles,
All is to me right well-known ground :—

But the unexplored land 'neath the moon's tall hills,
Tho' for my life 'tis little I care,
I would never think to penetrate there."

XXXI.

But San Salvador's people saw Hubert de Horne,
With his gay companions two or three,
Saw them set off at early morn
From their town, rock-built, not far from the sea ;
Saw them strike into the unknown interior,
Heavily armed with sword, with gun ;—
Shook their heads knowingly—" Ah ! " said they,
" Let them feel the fierce rays of that burning sun."

XXXII.

Aye, and they felt them. One drooped and died
Just five score miles from San Salvador,
And they buried him 'neath a spreading palm
On the rapid river Congo's shore.

Pressed on Hubert all the more eagerly
Over mountain, lake and river,
High as the Apennines, broad as Como,
Wide and deep as the Guadalquivir.

XXXIII.

Flowers that vied with Tyrian purple *
Hubert culled from the verdant earth :
To trees—each seemed a heavenly pinnacle,
So tall were they—that strange land gave birth.
Giant beasts played on the banks of streams ;
Strange birds cried in the dead of night ;—
Oft from his slumbers Hubert started
And grasped his sword, as in battle's height
The warrior grasps it, fiercely, firmly :
For noises smote on his 'wilder'd ear
As noise of battle, fiendish, deadly ;—
Yet Hubert de Horne thought never of fear.

XXXIV.

But as they pressed still onwards, inwards,
Tracked them, followed them, black grim death—
Hubert marked his comrades drooping, dying ;—
Caught he the last one's latest breath.

Then despondent, friendless, hopeless,
Sank beneath a palm's tall shadow ;
Dreamt of his home at Southbury town—
Dreamt of English city, meadow.
Starry daisies seemed to mock him ;
Buttercups of the golden hue
Seemed to wag their proud heads at Hubert,
Intoxicate with the morning dew.

XXXV.

Ebony visages many a score,
Stooped o'er him, looked at him, wondered much ;
But they ventured not to awaken him,—
Dared not the sleeping one's face to touch ;
Waited with patience, not very long,
Till the white man rose with a soul-deep sigh,
Gazed around in astonishment,
Drew his good blade to do or die.
Then Hubert paused, for in hate nor in fear
Moved not a muscle the ebony faces ;
Some, it is true, peered at him earnestly,—
Some made fearful, uncouth grimaces.
One came forward, the chieftain he,
Famous in battle, in chase renowned,

And spoke to Hubert, who shook his head—

The tongue was strange. Hubert looked around :
Circled him each side a dense black mass,

Like the ocean's waves swaying to and fro ;—
Ivory teeth and faces of ebony—

How many there were—Hubert did not know.

XXXVI.

Hubert was captured. He strove not against them,

Suffered whatever they willed to do ;
Stripped of his weapons, his ornaments,
To their grace or mercy he scorned to sue ;
Made up his mind for an unknown death,

A grave in the desert, if grave at all ;
Gave a last sigh for his Southbury home,
For his father mourning his lost son's fall.

XXXVII.

'T was deep, deep, deep in the interior,
Far from the dwellings of white-skinned man ;
From the curse God spake that fell so heavily
On the swarthy children of Canaan ;

No Jesuit fierce, with cross in hand,
Had chaunted there proud matin or vesper ;
No prayer had e'er cleft a path to heaven
From that spot, where sirocco and simoom whisper
At eve, and tell of the deeds they've done,
Of the bones they've bleached in the desert afar,
Of the sorrow they've wrought since, o'er Djebel Kumri,
Faded away the bright morning star.
And the swarthy captors of Hubert de Horne
Looked on the captured one curiously ;
Bowed to him as if he were a god ;
Looked on his pale face wonderingly ;
Asked him questions many a one,
Asked him too, ever persistently,
But he could answer them never a one,
For strange were their words flowing liquidly.

XXXVIII.

Fell her black feet as fall the swift wild cat's ;
Flashed her dark eyes as a lion's proud ;
A flowing robe fell loose around her,
As o'er his prostrate form she stood.

She had looked at the white man's countenance ;
Gazed on it silently, wistfully.
She came to release him from terrible death ;
She viewed him now, prostrated, tearfully :
For love, mysterious leveller,
That strange inscrutable mystery,
Had filled her heart with tenderness
For him since she saw him beneath the palm tree.

XXXIX.

She stooped over Hubert, roused him from his trance,
Then raised herself to her utmost height ;
Told him in liquid words of her nation
That he was doomed to die, even that night ;
Bade him arise if he would save him,
Rise and don her robe full flowing.
Told him she was Zove Zetangia,
That 'twas time that he was going :
For her father, chieftain mighty
Of the regions all about there,
Had willed that with the sun his being
Should go out,—and who oppose dare ?

XL.

Hubert heard her, but unmeaning
Fell her words on his listening ear.
“Hear you not?” she cried, extatic—
“Death and agony, pain and fear,—
Are they nothing, nothing to you?
Care you not for tortured limbs?
But, perchance, you are a god born,
Nought your life—your bright eye dims?
Whilst I, earth-born, who now for first time,
See such an one as I e’en might love,
Alas, but see him for an instant,
To know that he is of above.”
Thus she spoke; and tears welled upwards
From purest sorrow’s hidden fountains.
Hubert wondered—wondered greatly—
To see such sight ’neath the Kumri mountains.

XLI.

She continued:—“But perhaps he
Knoweth not what it is I say.
I must save him, and the lengthened shadows
Tell that ’tis nearing the close of day.”

From her form, like Corinthian marble
Smooth—and jet—her loose robe she threw,
And sought to cast it over Hubert,
Who saw amazed what she meant to do.
How should it be that an African damsel,
Far away from a civilised shore,
When her people had taken a desolate white man,
Lost in the forests he came to explore ;
How should it be that she should will
To set him free, and to take his place ?
Hubert did not know : but the love of life
Urged him to accept the proffered grace.

XLII.

He suffered her his pale face to cover ;
Himself with her robe to be wrapt about.
Carefully peered forth the dark-skinned damsel,
From the door of the hut looked she stealthily out.
Took a babe from her breast, kissed it fondly thrice,
Then placed it in Hubert's outstretched arms,
And crouched in a corner. When Hubert stepped out,
Fled at that instant all fears and alarms.
The balmy breath of that African eve
Raised his buoyant spirits to such a height,

That, but for the ebony faces about him,
He'd have chanted God's praise forth with all his might.

XLIII.

He has passed where in council the chieftain sits,—
The robe and the babe have deceived them all.
He is free! he is free! he is out in the forest;
He heeds not the fierce beasts, the strange bird's call.
But what is that hoarse cry that sounds on his ear,
Borne tardily on the evening wind?
Is it the rage of the ebony faces?
Is't the noise of their footsteps pursuing behind?

XLIV.

He clasped fast the infant he bore in his arms;
He bent to the contest; he bowed to the race.
Like the seven streams of Nilus, as swift, as wide rushing,
They follow, like lightning they follow the pale face.

XLV.

The wild chase was over. The stars pitied Hubert
As, worn with exertion, he fell to the earth;
The moon from her chariot smiled on him kindly,
As she 'gan her night march o'er the firmament's girth.

XLVI.

Seven times Hubert saw her silver chariot
Cross from east to west that tropical sky ;
Seven times Hubert saw her fiercer compeer
Sink in the west, from the east rise on high ;
Seven days Hubert looked forth, fruitlessly,
For the dark damsel's welcome face ;
Seven days Hubert lingered, tremblingly,
Near that spot where he ended the fearful race.

XLVII.

Hubert had in his breast a long, hard struggle
As he writhed on the ground that fierce eighth day :
Should he leave the babe—the babe that had saved him—
To become the wild beast's helpless prey ?
Or should he, toilsomely, painfully,
Carry it with him where'er he should go ?
Chivalry gained the ascendant with Hubert ;—
Tho' how he should do it—he did not know.

XLVIII.

Were I to tell of the dangers, the perils
That beset Hubert's life on his backward way ;

Were I to tell of his deeds of valour,
Of his fearful fits of despondency ;
Were I to tell how he left the babe,
But how e'er the sun had sunk in the west,
Again he clasped it tenderly, fondly,
To his—tho' wrathful—noble breast :
You would wonder much, you would wonder long,
That his frame should bear the terrible strain ;
That ever Hubert's weary feet
San Salvador's city should visit again.

XLIX.

Yes, but he did it. Just five short months
Since he buried his comrade on Congo's shore,
And Hubert, haggard, wayworn, weary—
Traversed the streets of San Salvador.
San Salvador's people looked on him curiously ;
Scanned they astonished the babe that he bore ;
Came to their memory the pale face of Hubert ;
Where were those that left with him San Salvador ?
Where ? confused murmur answered them speedily,
Murmur of palm tree, murmur of river,
Waves of lake dashing on lonely shore,
Waves of stream deep as Guadalquiver.

L.

Hubert met the old man with the eagle eye :

“ Aye, boy, and where are your comrades now ? ”

Hubert looked on him with a scornful look,

And a frown took possession of his brow,

As he said,—“ Old man, you may taunt as you will,

My comrades' tale is a sad, sad story ;

With mountains as headstones afar they lie,

Alone in their silent, sad, nameless glory.

Their mourners were unknown flowers of the forest,

Birds Europe knows not of, gigantic beasts ;

My comrades, old man, had no need of gravediggers,

No need of pall bearers, no need of priests.

LI.

“ 'T is strange for they would have lived—I had died.

They on the cold world their backs had not turned,

They longed for adventures, for fame ; their eyes,

As explorers' have ever, impatiently burned.

One the frail petals would eagerly view

And say, now and then, ‘ 'T is a species new.’

Another, when the camp fire was burning,

On the chart our onward course would draw

And tell ‘ We have travelled so far to-day.’

Another would say, ' 'T is a notable law
That explorers ever make names for themselves,
By calling each river, lake, land, or isle,
They find by their own names ;' and—fond conceit—
'Midst unselfish differing, many a smile,
They would name, and place on the skeleton-map
We carried, such names as Mountain De Horne,
River Edgar, or Hubert's fount.

And lo ! these all perished in life's sweet morn :
Whilst I, who had willingly taken their place,
Must live ! Ah, well, 'tis the way of the world :
Those who would die must live drearily on ;
Those who would live to death's arms are hurled."

LII.

The old man smiled :—" I have reached that phase
Of life when a man would welcome death :
But my story were better told at home,
If you'll venture my humble roof beneath.
You are weary. In rock-built Salvador
They can gaze right well—not so well can they aid.
You hesitate—well, I will force you not—
You're diffident perchance, perchance afraid.

You are welcome, I am a weak old man.

You will come ?" And so he led him away :—

"Aye, bring the babe too." Hubert followed him,
Urged by that veiled one—Destiny.

LIII.

"Come, taste that wine, boy, from Hubert's fount
No such ruby stream flowed I ween.

And so to my story. Sooth, when I think on't,
The unbidden tears rush to the founts of my eyne.
But I can master them ; I can smile

When my heart is heaviest ; I would weep—
Aye, like Niobe, for twice seven lost—

An my one child had been saved from the deep.
For joy's a wizard ; to unnatural use
He turns the pearly drops, which should rain
When sorrow smites, but joy bids them still
Rain on when grief's swallowed up again.

LIV.

"I was born where Loire's wide torrent weds
Its far brought waters to the sea :
But I will not tell of my boyhood—that
Was as happy as boyhood well might be.

Nor will I tell of the follies rank
That soiled my youth ; perchance the woe
That has followed all my weary days,
And made life's cup to overflow
With bitterness for me, was the fruit,
The whirlwind harvest for winds I sowed
In the seed time of life : it may be so—
Well, the crop was a grievous weighty load.

LV.

“ Tho' a fair young wife graced my castle hall,
My spirit wild brooked not staying at home.
To emperor and czar I paid my devoirs ;
I danced at Paris, I prayed at Rome.
I traversed the Frankish land from La Hogue,
To where the Pyrenees cleave the ether,
And wonderingly gazed by Lyons city
At the Rhone and Saone uniting together,
Surely wed—yet, like youth and maiden
Which should not have been wed, you see the twain
One—yet asunder—this sluggishly glides,
The other flows swiftly on to the main.

LVI.

“ When this turquoise I’d found on the Aveyron Mounts,
When I’d climbed the sides of proud Puy de Dome ;
Gazed on the fair Maison Quarrie at Nismes,
And the famed Bayeux tapestry,—longing for home
Stormed my heart-citadel—took it by storm ;
I longed to be seated by the side
Of her who, when I left Castle Orgueil,
Was little more than my blooming bride.

LVII.

“ I rode as tho’ for my life, and why
I could not tell. Thrice a shudder came,
Uncalled by night air,—a ghastly shudder,
Which made my hardy, manly frame
Like an aspen quiver. Ha ! had they word
Of my coming ? The ruddy light of flame
Looked o’er an eminence. True, ’twas meet
That the Orgueil hinds should welcome thus
With bonfire their lord’s returning feet.

LVIII.

“ Aye, ’t was a bonfire. Nay ’t was not,
’Twas Castle Orgueil wrapt in flames !

I stroked my black mare's arching neck ;
I called her by endearing names,
I coaxed, I spurred—the willing beast
Sank gasping, all too sore distrest.
I ran—I flew—o'er field, o'er fence ;—
Oh God ! those moments of suspense,
When flaming, smoking in my sight
The castle stood. I climbed the height :—
' Are they all safe ? ' ' They are not dead.'
' Can they be saved ? ' He shook his head :—
' They will not leap.' ' Man ! show me where
My well-loved ones unrescued are !'

LIX.

" I saw the red tongues lick their faces ;
I saw them take their last embraces ;
I saw them cling to one another,
My wife, my babe, my white-haired mother.
I shrieked, ' Your Emile's arms are strong !'
They would not cast themselves headlong.
I heard their scream, when at the last
The fiery surge o'er their features passed,
And blackened, hideous, shrinking, they
Fell to th' insatiate flames a prey !

LX.

“I weep ; and, boy, your eyes are moistened :

But my sad story is half untold.

But I must hurry o'er it : my heart's

More soft than I had thought it. Years rolled,—

Twenty years of lone existence,

Aimless being, were summed with the past.

What did I live for ? Why did I live ?

These were the desolate thoughts at last

That passed thro' my brain. I had no heir,

And I was the last of the Orgueil race ;

And should I let it die, nor leave

On coin-like humanity, impress

From the Orgueil mint ? Thro' Arragon

I aimless wandered ; and there my gaze

Fell on a Spanish maid, dreamy eyed—

A maiden with such an oval face

As poets love to praise. I wooed and wed

The lovely maiden ; but when the bride

Became a mother—'twas fated so—

The lily drooped,—she withered—died.

LXI.

“ But a boy was left, and at Orgueil I stayed
For three long years, then left him to roam
As of old I used, and the boy I sent
To visit his dead mother’s Spanish home.
But I am prolix. The bark set sail ;
Then lo ! for days raged so fierce a gale
It was no marvel that bark and my heir
Were lost. Was it strange I should then despair ?

LXII.

“ Above dark clouds you’ve seen Venus rise
At the hour ’twixt the light of the sun and Dian,
A lovely emblem of hope o’er despair
Arising. And thro’ my dark spirit ran
A glimmer of hope, faint as light of star,
When I heard that, at Salvador afar,
A ruined bark, sorely tempest-tost,
Her canvas tattered, her rudder lost—
Had put in. And I heard with joy
That there was saved just such a boy
As mine should be. I sought Salvador :
But the ruined bark was there no more.

'There was a boy such as you seek,'
They told me, 'and he was put on shore.'
But I found him not—hoped my heart would break :
But it would not. And still to Salvador
I cling, as the sailor clings to the mast
He knows cannot save him, and will not despair :—
And, boy, if you have as good cause to seek death
As I had, in truth we're a mournful pair.
I am weary of life—and La Vendée now,
Where Orgueil stands, seems for aid to call ;
And methinks there is no better death
'Than, shrouded in glory, for one's land to fall.'

LXIII.

He stopped ; and his keen observant eye
Had seen Hubert tremble when he spoke
Of his boy. He watched him furtively
Eye his features with eager look.
He waited awhile :—"Is your tale as sad,
Mine is told ?"—and then there came a pause.
And Hubert blushed and turned away,
And trembled.—For what strange, moving cause
Does he quiver thus ? He speaks—"Old man,
I see, I see the features wan

Reproachfully gazing on me now ;
I see a red, red streak on the brow
Of that one whose story —nay, I mean
My dearest friend, whose flashing eyne
I dimmed by misadventure,—well
'T was an accident, but ah ! he fell
Urged by this hand ; and on my soul
The deed weighs heavy. Some Eastern ghoul
Seems to dog my steps, and my laden breast
Is mocked by phantoms of unrest.
Awake, asleep, I seem to hear
His death-groan echoing in my ear.
'T is this that makes me heed not death :
For 't is too heavy a knapsack to bear
In the campaign of life, the foul red name
Of a blood-bespotted murderer."

LXIV.

When a man pours his soul forth his mien is calm,
Nor fears he the listener's anxious staring :
When a man's reticent he seems to dread
That all around him there may be glaring

Negations of his words ; and 't was so

With Hubert,—he cowered when the old man's gaze,

Clear as the day, met him full in the face,

And his forehead felt the burning glow

Of shame mount to it—when—“ Was that so ? ”—

The old man's keen inquiring glance

Seemed to say. And Hubert eyes him askance,

And mutters—“ Can it be ? ” and his fingers

Twitch nervously. On his face, too, lingers

Such a look as plays in culprit's eye,

When Justice seizes him :—and why ?

CANTO IV.

THE BATTLE-FIELD.

I.

I went to stay at a grand old house
That stands on a rock 'bove the Dover Straits,
(May be centuries old for aught I know,
Queer-faced keystones, ponderous gates ;)
Whence the waves are seen, all gold and green,
At eve when the sunbeams o'er them dance ;
Where a Bourbon exile lived and died,
In sight of his well-loved treacherous France.

II.

There were stately halls, corridors long,
Balconies, terraces, boudoirs there,
And a library where the *Faërie Queen*
Stood side by side with *Vanity Fair* ;

Where *Paradise Lost* and *L'Allegro*,
Shakespeare, and Dickens, and Tennyson too,
Shoulders rubbed with old Geoffrey Chaucer,
Don Juan, *Thalaba*, *Ivanhoe*.

III.

And there I fell on an old Latin book,
That talks of the folly, the woes of wars ;
It draws a ghastly picture in sooth
Of the god of battles, bloody Mars.
He feasts on sighs and groans, it says ;
His wine is the liquor clov'n veins supply ;
His mien is terrific, for ever there 'bides
A scowl on his face, a leer in his eye.
His solemn hymn is the widow's moan ;
His song is the orphan's tremulous wail.
Fear and Terror his serving-men,
Make the bravest one's cheeks grow pale.
The croaking raven his comrade flies
Round his car ; and the wolf his friend
Follows him ever ; and fierce blood-hounds
The tyrant's onward course attend.

IV.

And war is oft-times cruel. Proud monarch,

Who fightest for honour's fair sake, forsooth,
Is't honourable to sit on thy throne

While the flower of thy realm, thy bravour, thy youth,
Are fighting for thee? Nay, not for the land.

What tho' 't is called by another name?
Would that lay the peasant low on the sward?
Would that give the maiden over to shame?

V.

"Fils de Saint Louis, montez au ciel!"

The words were said, and the brows that had worn
Fair France's crown were low in the dust—

The butt of a misled nation's scorn.
Louis was dead; but in Vendée yet

Lived his memory fragrant; and lo! the sword
Was drawn in the surely righteous cause
Of France's foully murdered lord.

'Twas a war 'twixt white-robed Right, and mail-clad
Two-edged sword-armed, haughty Might;
And first it seemed that the victor's wreath
Was destined for the brows of Right.

But no. Ah ! the poet may never sing
The dirge of those who at Mans were slaughtered ;
Nor tell how, *sans* ruth, the verdant plains
With royalist blood were richly watered.

VI.

There babes whose sin was—that they were born ;
And women, whose tears touched no chord in the breast
Of the conqueror, swelled the carnage heaps ;
And still their brethren against them pressed,
Till the dead on the field were as thickly strewn
As the blossoms hang on laburnums in June.
'T was warfare such as demons would wage,—
A blot upon the historic page,
Which tears seraphic, (an seraphs might weep,)
Would fail from the record-book to sweep.

VII.

'T is true some fell not, but wearily fled,
But the foe overtook them at Savenay ;
There the red sword of Might drank its fill o' their blood.
And this was two days before Christmas Day,—

Two days before, throughout Christendom,
They celebrated the birth of Him,
Before whose advent the light on shrines
Of bloody idols had waxèd dim.
'Twas Wednesday too, on which, the Jews say,
The sun ever shines, 'twas his natal day :
But this day his brilliant light was paled,
With leaden clouds his bright face was veiled.

VIII.

Some can look on a battle-field and say,
“ 'T is a grain-field ; as seed those bodies are sown
To rise and bear fruit : ”—And that takes away
The chill dread feeling when standing alone
'Midst corpses. But not so Theodore,
'Mongst slaughtered Vendée he wept full sore.

IX.

Looking on dead eyes you sighing say,
“ These telescopes, heaven-wrought, have passed away
And left but their cases : ” and Theodore wept
As o'er the dead bodies he silently stopt ;—
Wept for heaven's art-treasures spoiled without ruth ;
Wept—'twas a sorrowful sight in sooth.

X.

There on a couch of rushes lay
A heap of dead. By the side of a brook—
(Whence oft-times the peasant at mid-day,
His hand the cup, the cool draught took)—
All gashed and bloody lay many a form ;
Some in which the life-blood still was warm,—
Some 'mongst thorns, and some by road-side fell,—
Some 'mongst stones as the seed in the parable.

XI.

Cold lips that had kissed the maiden's lips,
Earth restant. And eyes, like the sun in eclipse,
Rayless. And clenched, nerveless fingers :
And yet about slain in battle lingers
A peaceful look, if not by the sword,
But by the swift death-bearing shot they fell ;
But some faces seem as tho' looking hellward
They died : and these show there is a hell.

XII.

Theodore gently trod 'mongst the dead ;
He was seeking some one : for aye and anon,

Where the heaps were high, he would pause awhile,
And, with tremulous voice, would marmur, " John,
We must see who lies 'neath this heap ; " and then
With trembling hands the youth would raise—
(A Southbury youth who loved Theodore well)—
The dead and dying ; and every face
The twain would earnestly gaze upon.

XIII.

But they found not the object of their search ;
They grew weary : and now the blood-red flame
Of the sun tells them Christmas Eve is nigh.
But still they search. Is 'Theodore lame ?
Aye, mark that crutch ;—that pale haggard face
Of many a sleepless night bears the trace.

XIV.

He is worn out :—" John, I'll rest a while
'Mongst my countrymen,"—Here a mournful smile
Lighted his features,—“ But till the red sun
Says his work in this hemisphere is done,
You will seek him.” And Theodore sat down
On a hillock, and even on the crown

Of that lay dead ones. He heeded them not :
For where on the field might he find a spot
Not bloodstained. And then he drew from his breast
A letter to the baronet addressed,
From—aye from Hubert ! And thus it ran :—
“ Father, dost marvel to hear again
From thy son ?—(if son thou call’st me now.)—
’Tis strange, yes it is marvellous how
I live yet ;—for I have courted death,
Have wandered a tropical sky beneath
In search of him, yet received no scathe.

XV.

“ But methinks the reaper—as maiden coy,
When courted—will now no longer toy.
He rides on the terrified breezes that hover
The proud array of the battle-field over,
And there will I seek him. Where Frank meets Frank
Where the dead that fall on either rank
Are sons of France—there wander I,
There shall the last of the De Hornes die,
In the Bourbon’s cause,—aye the cause of him
Whose flashing eye and lithesome limb

I dimmed and stiffened.—Theodore !
That he might see me in that hour,
When, by his father's side perchance,
With sword in hand, I die for France ! ”

XVI.

“ By my father's side perchance ! Aye is this
Mere conjecture of thine ? or can it be so ?
An it were, I would count as the sweetest caress
I e'er felt, the cruel unbrotherly blow
That made thee a wanderer, Hubert ! But nay,
What strange things the sorrowful-hearted say !
He meant but to say that it might be so,
And *might* is a vague wide word I know :
For we might have been innocent ones in some dell
Of Eden with violets and asphodel
O'ergrown, if Eve had not sinned,—ah ! well
But she sinned ; and we might have been lost ones in hell,
Taunted by fiends, the arch-fiend our lord,
Had Calvary not stayed God's wrathful sword.”
And Theodore leaned on his hands his head,
And mused, and listlessly looked on the face
Of one of the many surrounding dead ;
And the winter sun's cold ruddy blaze

Enveloped him ; and he moodily sat
On the hillock's brow :—but whose tread was that ?

XVII.

The man was aged and wearied. The scar
On his forehead told he had mixed in the war.
And he started when he saw Theodore,
Gazed on him till he could gaze no more
For tears. Once he seemed as tho' he would fall
At his feet. But then he turned away
Sighing, and you might have heard him say,
“ Nay, it cannot be my lord at all ;
Such was he two score of years ago,
But now—he must be just such an one
As I ; his hair must be grey, on his brow
Time must have set his rough signet now.
His hand must tremble as mine trembles ”—“ Ho ! ”
Cried Theodore, “ Art thou friend or foe ? ”

XVIII.

He started : “ Nay, did you draw your sword
To slay me, I would say never a word
Of remonstrance ; I'd sheathe my blade, and so
You can scarcely call me a deadly foe.

Nay more, you may slay me an you will,
The kindest deed you can do is to kill.
For why? Twice have my wearied eyes
Been misled by strange mockeries.
In the fierce battle's heat methought
Upon our side a warrior fought,
Whose mien proclaimed my long absent lord ;
I followed swift where led his sword,
But fell ere I could tell in sooth
 If he were so. And now while striving
 To find him, not amongst the living,
 (For few Vendéans live to tell
 How their loyal brethren thickly fell)
But 'mongst the dead—I find a youth
Such as he was long years ago,
Yourself."—" Was that a shout. What ho !
Hast thou found him we seek for ? " " Aye."
" And does he live ? " " He may not die."

XIX.

He lay beneath an elder tree,
 That curst tree, cursèd for, they tell,
 Thereon foul Judas, that child of hell,
In retributive misery

His vile life ended. And Theodore
Smiled when he stooped the poor form o'er ;
For life was there, in the dim dark eye,
He saw life shining, oh ! so faintly.
But that old man by his side was dead,
The purple stream dyed the hoary head,
Yet on the stained face a sweet smile played.

XX.

And he who had gazed upon Theodore
Stooped with him the bloody forms o'er :
But was he mad ? “ 'Tis he ! 'tis he ! ”
What means he ? “ Orgueil's master rise !
Thank God it is thy native skies
Thou liest beneath. Thou may'st not die ;
It may not, cannot, must not be
That I have found thee dead ; that eye
Must open and behold this face,
Where Time has left his woeful trace
Even as on thine. Ah ! master, say
But one word !—Show thou art not clay !
Move but this hand ! 'Tis cold, 'tis cold ! ”
And the big tear-drops downwards rolled,

And on the dead man's cheeks they fell,

And he seemed weeping, but was not.

That he was dead, 'twas seen too well.

The man seemed rooted to the spot.

XXI.

And then he looked upon Theodore,

And scanned his every feature o'er,

And said, "*He* lost a son i' the flood,

The last who inherits the Orgueil blood,

Who would have been such as thou." This was said

In inquisitive tone ; and he looked on the dead,

And on Theodore. Theodore gazed on the face

Of the speaker, and looked on the dead man too,

And muttered, " Even I can see a trace

Of my features in that dead man's brow.

I was saved from the deep ; and a mantle blue

Of velvet enwrapped me ; and I have heard how

I prattled in Frankish tongue when saved.

And in my memory is engraved

This only relic of my lost home :—

In some low, vasty, archèd room

That looks dim thro' the mnemonic haze,—

Distant hills are like far memories,

The farther from them you get they appear
More blue, more cloudlike, until they rear
Their heads so distant 'tis hard to say
They are not clouds ;—so with memory :—

XXII.

“ It may be but a cloud, a vapour, a vision,
But still, methinks, this vast room was a prison,
And in one corner, a ghastly sight !
Still armour-clad, tho' the skull so white
Looked thro' the visor, and uselessly,
The arms, whence the armour had rusted away,
Fleshless bones, hung down by the side—
Lay a form, even it seemed as he died :
For, an I remember, blood stained the floor
That told how he died.”—He heard Theodore,
Then, flinging his arms around him, “ Ah ! Boy,
Alas that a servant's and not a sire's joy
Should greet thee ! But, lo ! oblivion shrouds
Thy sire ; on his face sit the dusky clouds
Death sends, which tell that rankling deep
His arrow has pierced ; yes, the heavy sleep
Which mocks at thunder, the parting screen
'Tween quick and dead, seals thy father's eyne.

XXIII.

“ Weep eyes, yea rain as in Noah’s days,
When skies and ocean were blended together :
Yet smile mouth, greet the heir with smiles.
Show face a kind of April weather,
Raining, yet with the bright sun shining,
As ’twere a cloud with silver lining.”

XXIV.

“ Is this my father ? ” He said no more,
But flung himself on the corpse so gory ;
Kissed the clay-cold lips, and the fixed eyes ;
Toyed with the blood-stained locks so hoary ;
Wept not—his heart was too full to weep :
But anon would put his ear to his breast
And listen fruitlessly, and anon
The sigh that told how his soul was oppress’d
Would part his lips. And they stood apart,
The wounded Frank and the Southbury boy.
There’s a sacredness in grief as in joy :
What would you say of the bold intruder
Who, in the merriment of his heart,
Would stay with the Bride and her spouse ? No r

In sooth you'd say might be found. And methinks
When the chain of heaven-woven, marvellous links
Is broken—the chain of life—and the soul
That's left would give vent, without control,
To its woe,—or weeping, or raving, or sighing,
Complaining, or mourning, or, agony-urged, lying,
As the Tishbite lay, on the corpse and chiding,—
'Tis a scene that woos as much for hiding
As the fullness of joy : and so thought they twain ;
And they turned their faces away from the slain,
And the mourner, and the cursed elder tree :—
But what might that terrified low wail be ?

XXV.

The sinking sun's enruddied light
Shone on his face. Oh ! that look of dread,
That look of wonder infinite !
In that wild look there might be read
Awe, yea and terror, deep amazement :
Yet from that eye, as from a casement
Peeps the maiden on her lover,
Furtively, you might discover
A look almost of joy outshining ;
Then every look you saw declining

In the dark orbs, and Hubert sank
Back swooning, and the orbs were blank.

XXVI.

Theodore saw him and left the dead,
Kneeled on the ground by him, raised his head
On his breast, and "Hubert! Hubert!" cried,
"Do you know who it is by your side?
He who fell from the ruin that day,
Whom you thought you had slain but had not. Say
Do you know?" But Hubert heard never a word;
And now where the sharp-cutting, cruel sword
Had made a breach in the fleshy wall,
The blood gushed forth. And the dusky pall
Of night was now falling; and where to go
With the wounded one they did not know.

XXVII.

Just then, strange sound for a battle-field,
Where murderous weapon's resounding clang
Had not long ceased! sweet notes out-pealed;
'Twas a maiden's voice, and thus she sang:—

1.

He met her in the dewy morn ;
He dallied with her all the day :
When twilight laughed the sun to scorn,
He would not from the maiden stray.

2.

He said her eyes were like twin stars ;
He said her breast swelled like the ocean ;
He said his heart, all rough with scars,
Was the frail bark there set in motion.

3.

She laughed and said, " Ah well a day !
Why should men still wish to deceive ?
Too well I know that what you say
"Twere folly in me to believe ! "

4.

He sighed. And when the morrow rose
She met his troop with banners gay ;
And she was there his eyes to close
When by Death's side at eve he lay.

5.

"Twas now her turn to sigh—she cried,
" Ah that I had but heard his vow !

For this cold couch by Death's loathed side,
His lover's bower had held him now ! ”

XXVIII.

An I were some impassioned boy
I'd tell of this sweet maiden's tresses,
Her peachy cheeks, her flashing eye,
And all the thousand lovelinesses
That held their court in the virgin's breast ;
The red ripe lips that wooed for kisses,
And all the troupe of blushing blisses
Her touch would conjure. These must rest
For some more passionate lyre to waken :
For I will leave these chords unshaken,
And her a lovely fountain sealed ;
And only tell how, o'er the field,
She led the little sad *cortège*
Thro' the dim grey-plumed twilight haze,
To where, not far from the field of blood,
Her mother's humble cottage stood.

XXIX.

Yet I may tell of the woman's art
She showed in tending the wounded one ;

How his moanings pierced to her inmost heart ;
How she did what woman has often done—
Sat sleepless by his side while sleeping ;
And tell how she could not refrain from weeping
When the third dawn said, “ Day has come,”
And they started for dead Orgueil’s home.

XXX.

Funereally slow the *cortège* wends
Its steps Orgueil-wards : and I would pause
And tell how th’ estranged twain once more friends
Met ; how this heard of the death of the cause
Of their strife with sobbings incontinent ; how
That heard of the wanderings of the other,
With wonder and grief altern on his brow ;
And how, aye and anon, he would murmur, “ Brother,
How thou hast suffered for me ! ” “ Not so,”
Hubert would say, “ I merit it well,—
Aye, I merit more brother than earthly woe,
Th’ undying, unsoothable pains of hell
Are for me, and such as me ! ” “ Brother, no ”—

XXXI.

“ But Theodore, aye ;—I have heard my doom.”
“ How, Hubert ? ” “ I lay in thy father’s room

One night, and in Vision went far away
Till I came to the bright realms of Paradise ;
Blest Araby's fragrance filled the air,
Odour of blossom, fragrance of spice,
Made the air heavy ; while melody sweet,
Melody as from thousand throats
Of nightingales, fell on my ravished ears ;—
Melody as of thousand notes
Played on Æolian harps of gold,
By tuneful cherub or seraphim,
Made me think of the bliss of Eden,—
Made me mourn, till my eyes grew dim
With grief for our common father's fall,
Which barred to me that pearly gate :
And the fragrance and the melody
Crushed my weary soul : Ah ! the dreary weight.

XXXII.

“ I dreamt I wandered on and on
Scanning the fair walls of Paradise,
Those happy walls, o'er which there came
Melody sweet and odour of spice.
With eager eye I scanned the walls,—
Perchance a hole might be found therein !

Ah ! how I looked ! Swift came the thought,
Savours this looking not of sin ?
Scarce had the thought my spirit crossed
When a shadow fell my path athwart.
My soul felt chilled. I raised my eyes ;
Stood before me a figure swart !
('Twas the Evil One tho' I knew it not.)
'Friend,' said he, 'Would'st thou enter there ?
The wall's not high : '—so he raised me up.
I just got a glimpse of that land so fair,
When a flash, and lo ! a flaming sword
My passage barred, my vision scared ;
A mocking laugh I heard behind,
Before me saw a right arm bared,—
A red right arm and flaming sword !
So I loosed my feeble hold of the wall :
Terror and fear so filled my frame
I cared not for the threatened fall.

XXXIII.

“ I dreamt I wandered sad away,
Anywhere, anywhere out of the sight
Of the city fair. Oh I longed to hide
My head in some endless realms of night !

I wished, with David, the wings of the dove,
 To flee to the uttermost parts of the sea ;
I wished my soul were blotted out
 For aye from the list of things that be.
A footstep fell upon my ear,
 This time a footstep soft and low ;
A shadow fell athwart my path ;
 ‘ Who ? who ? ’ I thought, ‘ comes to mock me now ? ’
But he spoke,—the tone was low and sweet,
 My soul drank in his every word ;
Across my brain there flashed a thought,—
 ‘ It is,’ I cried, ‘ It is my Lord ! ’

XXXIV.

“ Gracious the words he uttered then,
 But ah ! they pierced me to the soul !
‘ Why did’st thou, like a thief,’ he said,
 ‘ Attempt to gain the shining goal ?
The gate stands open for my guests—
 My guests ! My father calls them *Son* ;
Why didst not thou the title claim
 My brother ? Why, poor doubting one ? ’
But then he looked on my brow, and sighed :—
 ‘ But thou’rt an alien, Cain’s mark I see,

That ghastly frontlet, is on thy brow !

Ah ! my golden crown's not for such as thee ! '
And he turned away, tho' a pitying look

He cast on me." Hubert's voice waxed low,
And Theodore smiled, and said, " Hubert, dear,
Dost thou think thou'rt doomed from that ?—Not so."

XXXV.

And Theodore strove to comfort him,

And to lead his thoughts from that theme away,
And succeeded. And Hubert told him how

He had met the old man whose hair was grey
At San Salvador ; and of all that befell
Him in the interior ; of the child

That had saved him, and how, as the woodflower wild
Transplanted will wither—(he wept to tell
This)—that babe had withered and died ;
How when seated by the old man's side
At Salvador, he had heard his tale,—
And how he had quivered and waxed pale
When, the story told, the wild thought rushed
Through his brain, " His heir these cursed hands pushed
Off that old ruin, it must be so ! "

" And why," mused Theodore, " did you go

With him whose son you thought you had slain ? ”

O'er Hubert's brow flitted a look of pain :—

“ Man ever loves incongruity ;

The cassocked priest, with saintly tongue

Chanting the matin or even-song,

Oft thinks, ‘ Ah could these poor dupes see

My cell a few hours hence, methinks

My saintly demeanour, which hoodwinks

Their souls so well, would all go for nought ! ’

And the nun meek-faced, but inly hot,

Telling her beads will often sigh,

‘ How well it befits a bride of the sky

To have thoughts like these ! ’ And Theodore, I

Thought inly, ‘ If this old man but knew

That his trusted comrade his lost heir slew,

How would that fiery countenance change

From friendship to hate ! ’ Companionship strange !

’Twas as tho' the wolf that had slain the lamb

Should herd with the slaughtered innocent's dam.”

XXXVI.

The sun was bending to kiss the west

When Orgueil's turrets were seen afar.

What feelings reigned then in Theodore's breast ?

Sorrow and pride were surely at war.

No pillars of Grecian mould were there,

No carven shafts, scarce a sculptured stone ;

Yet proud looked Orgueil's castle old,

Fair 'neath the wintry sun it shone.

Exalted on an eminence,

It looked down on the Loire's wide stream ;

Its castellated ramparts shewed

'Gainst the blue sky, as in a dream

You've seen ramparts, turrets, wondrous fair.

There is a ruined chapel there,

Round which rank grave-yard grasses wave

O'er many a long-forgotten grave ;

Knights, ladies, priests, all mingled lie,

Those who had found it hard to die,

Those who had said, " Death, come away,

Thou'rt sweet," alike uncomplainingly.

XXXVII.

There lay the Spanish maid, dreamy-eyed,

Theodore's mother ; and there they laid,

In the cold dank dreary vault by her side,

Her spouse. And when the last rites were paid

That love and religion call for, how dreary
The world felt to Theodore ! “ I am weary
Of living,” he sighed, “ Would God the cold tomb
Would ope for me too,—’tis my only home ! ”

XXXVIII.

But when peasants came flocking round to see
Their Phoenix-like lord—(from the ashes sprung
Of his sire, as it were)—when hoary dames,
With April faces, his two hands wrung
And said, “ Aye thou art Orgueil’s heir,
An Orgueil is not found everywhere ; ”
And maids, who were babes when he was lost,
Rejoiced as tho’ for some sailor brother ;—
Then Theodore’s spirit the sweet thought crossed,
That sometimes a life is given for far other
Cause than to be a joy to the owner ;
And certainly mortgaged ; and that the arch-loaner
At the great balance-day the soul will require,
Tho’ soiled, yet decked with gems for its hire :
And to bedeck their souls all may aspire ;
Good deeds are pearls, a kind word’s a sapphire.

XXXIX.

And he smiled,—what tho' 'twas a watery smile?—

In return for the greetings of the swains.

Alas, there was many an absent one,

Whose life-blood ruddied transpontine plains!—

And spoke to them lovingly, did not disdain

Their sympathy. Wounded Gaspar led

Him thro' the extent of the Orgueil demesne ;

And many a shower of tears was shed

By those who had heard their lord's sad tale ;

And many a voice said, " Ah ! but he's pale !

There's a death-like pallor on that face,

He may still be the last of the Orgueil race."

XL.

By patting the curly pate of the boy ;

Appreciating the young mother's joy ;

Meeting the anxious maiden's gaze

With a cheery look on his pale, pale face,

And saying, " Who knows ? your Jean may come back

As sound as that evening, when with his knapsack

He parted from you down by the river ;"

And telling the matron, with a quiver

In his voice, that if God willed her Jacques must die,
“ Then,” he’d say cheerily, “ Who but I
Should provide for you and your little ones ? ” By
Taking the proffered gift, tho’ chiding
Sometimes at the largesse, and never hiding
Himself from those who would speak with him,—
Tho’ he oft-times faced them with eye so dim
’Twere easy to tell where he had been,
Ev’n tho’ they had not from the grave-yard seen
His steps advancing ; by doing in few,
As ’twere ever well for lords to do,
He won in the hearts of the simple folk
A place, yea, fashioned himself a nook
In their prayers ; and sooth it was with sorrow
They heard old Gaspar say, “ To-morrow
Our lord will sail for England,” tho’
All along they knew it must be so.

This is the sweet antithesis
Of my story. The Vicar told me this
Smiling thro’ tears. He told me how
Futurity’s like the path over the brow
Of a hill ; or rough, or smooth, or stony,

Or whether a precipice awfully sheer
Confronts the wayfarer,—who may know ?

And some dark gulf he thought he was near,
When, flinging remonstrance aside by the wile
Of saying with tender watery smile,
“ But, father dear, think of Hubert’s woe,”
Theodore in search of his friend would go.

Each day seemed long as that wondrous one
When the moon stood over Ajalon
To the Vicar, till one bleak snowy day,
When a white robe enwrapped Southbury,
A face, almost as white as the snow,
Peered into his room, sought his face and lo !
Somebody’s arms were round him flung ;
Was it the sound of Theodore’s tongue ?

Aye. Or the voice of Orgueil’s lord.
But he was not long so. There soon came word
That the Orgueil demesne was confiscated.
All Theodore said, was, “ Well it seems fated
That I should be curate of Southbury :”—
Yet he thought of the Orgueil swains mournfully.

And Hubert ? The haughty baronet
Courteously greeted his son. But alas !
His was not a nature to let a fault pass
Unnoticed. And in his memory yet
Lived Hubert's disgrace, till one spring day,
From Southbury he was ta'en away
By the Pale Steed's Rider.

I scarce need tell
That oft o'er a grave, where waved harebell,
And many a flower of as little note,
Hubert and Theodore bended and wept ;
That oftentimes before them would float
Words, deeds of the dead, that long time had slept
In their memories ; and they would sigh
And say, " Ah, Lucy, 'twas cruel to die."

And 'twas strange the thought of her never raised
A barrier between them. And years flew past,
Each differing but little from the last,
And those who had known the twain were amazed :
For instead of hate's rank hemlock, lo !
Love's rose in their hearts' gardens seemed to grow ;

And not only grow, but bear blossom, in deed
And word. For the twain were always together,—
In sunshine, in rain, in all kinds of weather ;
And when any in Southbury had need
Of the curate, when death's horror-feathered shaft
Was felt, and the cup must needs be quaffed
That Laz'rus, and Dives too, must drain,—
There would be found the inseparable twain.
At last they called them, so oft did they see
Them together, " The two curates of Southbury."

'Tis not often men love with a woman's love,
Which transcends a man's as the pine towers above
Its dwarfed Arctic brother. There's something cold,
Arctic-like, in a man's love. Gold
Seems to take the place of snow, and thwart
Love's growth in man's sterner, more earthy heart.
A woman's love ! What will that love not dare ?
A pure woman's love ! 'Tis a thing one might swear
By, couching the oath thus :—So sure as her love
No creature in hell or on earth might remove,
So surely.—And such love between Theodore
And Hubert sprung up. And but few more

Than Saul's princely son of such love might tell,
For Israel's sweet singer loved him just so well.

There is a spot in the hazel wood,
A temple of nature wondrous fair,
A spot where one might worship well ;
Of sweet spring nights Phillis warbles there ;
And the hyacinth, and primrose pale,
And violet, so mosaic it o'er
In vernal days, that, so I am told,
'Tis called " The fairy's home by the shore."
And a stream and a mimic waterfall
Make the grove with pleasant noises ring,
Like prattle of childhood, while, far aloft,
Nature's choir sweetly their praises sing.
Wandering there one glorious eve in May,
To his comrade Hubert blushing said,
" Theodore, these choristers pair whilst we
Live single ;—brother should we not wed ? "

On July days when the sun was hot
And, roused by the breezes, the sad sea laughed,
The twain would set flowing sails to their boat—

(*England's Pride* was the name of the craft).
And once while scudding the coast along,
 Rocked by the gently rolling sea,
Hubert said, "The waves and our bark are wed,
 Brother Theodore, only we
Live single." But Theodore sighed: "Well, brother,
I have no room in my heart for another
Bride than Lucy."

 But Hubert wed
A proud earl's daughter, whose face he said,
Was like hers who leaned over his languishing bed.
And a boy was born. And Theodore
 Seemed his father—co-owner of the treasure.
And a girl was born. And Hubert seemed
 Possessed, in sooth, of such a measure
Of happiness, as one might hope
To have mixed with the bitters of the cup
Of life.

 But the curate of Southbury
Declined. They saw him dying away
For years. The rose in his cheek was too red.
And, one Christmas Eve, Theodore lay dead
In the vicarage.

Here the vicar paused.

The recollection of that day caused
The flood-gates of his eyes to ope ;
And 'twas long ere the briny floods would stop.

But my task is done. The vicar's dead too ;

He died one August eve, I am told,
And, like his wife, he faded away

While the heavens were tinged with the evening gold.
And the boy who was born in Theodore's time

Is Sir Hubert de Horne of Southbury ;
And his sister wears a coronet :—

And Southbury stands by the sea.





